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KING OF THE PEAK.

A Romance.

BY THE *Wm Bennett*
AUTHOR OF "THE CAVALIER," &c.

"The truth is, I have a plot for you." — *Cutter of Coleman Street.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE
KING OF THE PEAK.

CHAPTER I.

You must reform your habit too, a little.

CUTTER OF COLEMAN STREET.

OUR readers, without our assistance, would perhaps be at a loss to account for the sudden appearance of the wife of Ollerenshav at the critical moment which was to decide the fate of the outlaw; and might, *with* some appearance of reason, entertain an opinion, that we had brought her in by the head and shoulders for the mere sake of effect. But this, let us assure ye, worthy friends,

is not the case. We need not confess that which is known to every helluo librorum, viz. that such stage-traps are in great request with some of our best romancers, and are, perhaps, a justifiable kind of awakener to those of their readers whose imaginations are becoming listless and drowsy. We ought, therefore, to be thankful that necessity hath not in our case been the mother of invention ; but that, without going one step out of our way, we can account for the apparition of the ugly woman, and, at the same time, preserve the dignity of historical consistency to the judgment of the most sceptical critic, either in London or Edinburgh.

The valet of Edward Stanley, Robert or Robin Ridgway by name, the bearer of those bundles of clothes, and other appendages of a gentlemanly vesture, that were selected by Sir George Vernon and his master from the wardrobe of Haddon, appeared at the cottage of the woodman, soon after the star-bespangled night had superseded the golden-robed goddess of the day. All was as his master had left it. The outlaw, Gilbert Ollerenshaw,

his daughter, and his son, were still absent ; and the dame was busily engaged in providing supper for her guests, apprehending that the mandate for their departure would not arrive until the morning. Sparandam had till now snored away his ennui on a settle, whilst the Jesuit occasionally conversed with his sister upon family occurrences, as the intervals of her management would admit. The sight of the messenger soon, however, changed the aspect of affairs. The dame ceased her culinary cares, the Jesuit arose from his seat beside the fire, and with some difficulty, awoke his heavy companion, who no sooner learned the meaning of his being disturbed, than he sprang from his couch with the agility of a youth, and seizing upon one of the bundles, speedily laid its contents open to view. It contained the sable suit, and was not at all to the taste of the German, who cried aloud “ Schwarze ! der feind — we are no doctors of law. — Here, comrade, take you this. — I’ll run the fortune of war upon the other wallet.”

With great expedition he opened the remaining parcel, and was much pleased at the sight of the gay habit, sword and dagger, which it contained.

“Oho!” he exclaimed, “this will do — good weapons, and fit for a noble cavalier. I see it. — Ned Stanley would still have me preserve the soldier — thou art to play the civilian.”

“My master commissioned me with a note!” said Ridgway, delivering the epistle written by Stanley to the German, who ran hastily over it.

“Himmel!” cried Sparandam, with a peevish countenance; “what’s this? Appear at Haddon as the friends of Sir George — well, right enough — both in the characters of laymen — right again — not to let the outlaw see us in our new clothing. — Do you hear, goody, if that fellow comes back to-night, clap him into your wood-hole — we must be there to-night, but not before the guests are a-bed, and to place ourselves beneath the walls, where we shall be looked for?”

“How is that?” cried the woman.

“Didst not hear?” cried Sparandam, sulkily. “We must wait in this dog-hole

another two hours, for I trow they do not get to rest at Haddon before ten; and then we must stand beneath the wall until we are spoke with. Thou mayst clap thy pots on the fire again; for I see, unless we fill here, we shall fast until morning. But come thou with me, knave — what's thy name?"

"Ridgway," replied the valet; "Robin Ridgway, at your service."

"Then Robin follow me, and I will make thee serviceable," said Sparandam, ascending a ladder which was the means of communication with the upper story of the cottage; "come along, and bring the bundles — come, comrade — we will dress, whilst goody prepares supper."

The Jesuit followed his sturdy colleague, and the valet with the wallets ascended last, leaving Dame Ollerenshaw to resume the employment which she had abandoned. Our readers may now be informed of that which it is probable their sagacity has long detected, viz. the intimate acquaintance which the wife of the woodman possessed with the true character, the concerns, and amour of her

lodger, the outlaw, to whose safety she at a glance perceived the directions in Edward Stanley's note boded no little danger. She knew it was the practice of her inmate to appear nightly beneath the window of his mistress, and to inform her of his presence by a tune on his guitar, with which he frequently amused himself at the cottage, and his signal was either answered immediately, as hath before been related, or the silence of Dorothy Vernon denoted that circumstances were unfavourable for an interview. With the intentions of her father and Edward Stanley to watch for the coming of Sparandam and the Jesuit, it was evident, from the note of Stanley, she was wholly unacquainted; and it was more than probable, it was certain, that, unless Dorothy Vernon learned that intention by some private channel, she and her lover would be caught, and the outlaw might be murdered in the first transports of Sir George's fury. How to deliver them from this impending peril, Dame Ollerenshaw was at a loss to conceive. Her husband and son and daughter were

all abroad, and had been the whole of the day, or one of them she might have sent in quest of the outlaw, and have cautioned him of his danger; and as this was now the only means by which her inmate could be saved, she resolved, so soon as she had served her guests with their meal, to hasten to Haddon, and await the appearance of the outlaw, in case none of her family came home before, whom she could substitute in her stead. She had scarcely come to this conclusion, before her brother and his companion, with Ridgway, descended from the loft, clad in their new habiliments. And whatever our readers may believe, the sources from which we derive our information assert that they both made a very handsome display. The rich dress wore by the German colonel sat extremely well upon his robust figure, and his beaver and dark plume shadowed off the military wildness of his fierce countenance. Our readers will doubtless be aware, that very little courtesy, or what is now called gentility, went to the composition of the military character in that age. Like the

French army at this day, the soldiery of Charles the 5th and his son were as much distinguished for their ferocity, and disregard of the harmonies of life, as for their valour and their contempt of death. Accordingly, though, as we have before stated, the person of Colonel Sparandam was much improved by his change of habiliment, his manners were as blunt, his expressions as coarse, his courtesy as small, as before he had adopted the look of a gentleman. Disguise of any kind was, in fact, above the colonel's genius; for had he unfortunately been selected to have sustained an ecclesiastical part, instead of the one allotted to him, the first contradiction he met with would have betrayed the military drawcansir. The Jesuit, whose tall, thin, and inclined figure, and whose mild but acute features denoted the man of intense application, of habitual thought, and subdued spirit, and whose artful courtesy shewed the cultivation of polished society, assorted well with the character which others might suppose him to be, judging only from his clothes, viz. that of a professor

of law in some high station, or fulfilling some of the duties of the state, and, unlike his companion, there was no part in the ecclesiastical or civil orders of life, which he would not have admirably supported. Besides divinity, which perhaps occupied the smallest portion of his attention, the Jesuit was well versed in the civil law, and, in compliance with a rule of his order, as well as from his own inclination, tolerably studied in physic and chirurgery : he was also a man, not only of an extended knowledge in general literature, but had particularly turned his attention to political economy, with a view of qualifying himself for an interference in those negotiations in which he was engaged. And in giving this character of Father Paul, we do not ascribe to him greater qualities than were required in every man of his order. Without such properties, no man was admissible into that dark and secret society, whose ambition aspired to the direction of the world.

The wife of the woodman used infinite dispatch in preparing the supper, and

having at length placed it upon the table, she said, “ I must leave ye for a while, sirs, so help yourselves — I will return afore ye’ve done — help yourselves, and be not halo, sirs — brother, see that your neighbour lacks nought.”

“ And whither is it you are going, goody ?” said Sparandam, placing himself before the door. “ By Saint Hugo, no one shall stir from this spot until I go.”

“ You wrong yourself, sir,” cried the woman, “ to molest me ; I have work abroad that’s to be done.”

“ Then let your husband or your son do it,” replied Sparandam ; “ for on no occasion shall you go forth. Sit ye down, woman, sit ye down.”

“ Pize o’ ye,” cried Dame Ollershaw, “ what think ye I want abroad ? The cow’s to be milked, is she not ; ye would not have her go dry for lack o’ being milked ? Leave your fool’s game.”

“ Nay, if that be all,” said Sparandam ; “ Robin Ridgway, go with this

woman to her cow, if it be no further than the out-house, and wait with her while she milks it."

"I'll have none of Robin Ridgway with me," cried the dame furiously; "I've fifty things that must be done, that do not need his help."

"And that will not bear his company," said the German. "True, and so I will not trust ye."

"Why, brother! have not you a word to speak to this man," cried the dame, "that will let me in my needs, for very wantonness?"

"What is it you fear, colonel?" said the Jesuit.

"She is for speeding to yon outlaw," said Sparandam confidently; "I'll be sworn that is her purpose. Stanley hath cautioned us in his letter, and he hath a head too deep to say random words without meaning—woman! I distrust thee—thou art too deeply tied to this wandering fellow to serve us with honesty."

"A red murrain on thy distrust!" cried the woman; "thou art one of those that doth drive off fellows from your

good cause with impertinent suspects. Think ye I would betray my brother?"

"Ay, thy father—thy whole family for a tester!" cried the German, enraged at her freedom. "Thou wilt d—n thy soul with obedience to this outlaw, while he has a stiver to reward thee."

"Hell reward thee with a gibbet!" cried the woman fiercely, "that can deal about thy curses for nought. Why have I not betrayed ye before?"

"I care not; but thou shalt not now," answered Sparandam, "I'll be your surety. But if thou dost not want to seek this fellow, or thou dost seek him on no business regarding us."

"On no business touching your safety, by my soul," cried the woman.

"Ha! list ye, comrade, list ye," cried the colonel with a sneer. "She confesses she is about to seek him. Why, then dame, be it when we are gone. Let us be safe, and thou mayst stick to him like a leech. But I tell thee, and by my blood and honour it is sooth, I would not let thee pass this threshold until we all quit the cottage for a thou-

sand pound ; so content yourself. Ridgway, do thou stand centinel while we sup."

Ridgway took his stand by the door, and Sparandam, seizing a chair, seated himself at the table, and, without more words, helped himself plentifully to the cheer it presented. The Jesuit also partook of it, but very sparingly ; and the woodman's wife, planting herself against the ladder which was opposite to the table, glared upon her antagonist with eyes like the Gorgon's. Her whole appearance was indeed so any thing but human, so frightfully distorted, that it appalled the soul of the valet, who, had he not been supported by the company of the colonel and his colleague, would soon have left the cottage to its witch-like possessor. Though fearful she should catch him taking any note of her features, the valet could not refrain from stealing an occasional look at her, and by the time that Sparandam had concluded his repast, and they were ready to quit the cottage, he had so deeply impressed the figure and lineaments of

their hostess upon his memory, and so perfectly allied her exterior with all that he had heard and could imagine of fiends and witches, and devils in human shape, that he was almost as much afraid to go into the open wood, where this she-fiend would have an hundred opportunities of revenging herself upon them, as he would have been to have staid alone with her in the cabin.

The woman, during the whole time of supper, kept a sullen silence, not even addressing her brother, who seemed too much absorbed in his own thoughts to take any notice of her taciturnity. But when Sparandam rose from his seat, and the Jesuit, with mechanical obedience, followed his example, she approached her brother, and taking him by the hand, said, with violent agitation, "Reginald, we must bid farewell."

"Nay, Constance," replied the priest, "we shall be close at hand. I will see thee often — daily."

"It must not be" answered the woman; "we have met for the first time these forty years, and it must be the last."

“Wherefore the last, sister?” returned the Jesuit. “Hath my conduct displeased thee?”

“I say not that it has,” replied the dame; “but our stations in life have so changed our relation, that thou art no longer the brother of Constance Onshaw, the wife of a miserable poacher. Thou art honoured among the great — thou mayst sit in the company of princes, whilst thy own blood would be kicked from the threshold, when the very dogs might pass it.— Go in peace.”

“I cannot leave thee thus,” said the Jesuit; “misery hath soured thy spirit. But I knew not thou wert so low before to-day, else, small as are my means, I would gladly have succoured ye.”

“Thou didst not know my misery, I believe,” replied the woman, “else hadst thou kept aloof from this hovel. The poor and wretched are seldom sought by the happy and honoured.”

“Thou doest wrong me, Constance,” said the Jesuit mildly, but earnestly, “thou doest wrong me much. The servants of the humble Jesus are not

arrogant of spirit; it is their duty, and they make it their pleasure, to seek out the needy and the wretched, to give them temporal assistance where it is wanted, and that which is of greater worth, the consolations of the church. Oh then, though thou hast been bitten by the keen wind of poverty, and its sharp tooth hath devoured the milkiness of thy nature, deem me not unnatural. Thou art still my sister. Thou wouldst not have been more honoured, had I found thee the lady of a baron's hall, instead of the wife of a woodman."

"Well, then, I will believe that art still a good kinsman," replied the woman, somewhat moved. "But natheless, we have met, and we part for ever. I can do ye no good by taking part in your trial, except with my prayers, which shall not be wanting for your success. But come not nigh the woodhead again. My husband and son may get a scent of your work, and then are ye sure to be bought and sold. Fare ye well, Reginald."

"Take this at least," said the Jesuit, drawing a large purse from his pocket.

“ If you need it not yourselves, let it be Rose’s dowry to some honest man. She hath my blessing also. Fare ye well.”

The woman took the purse, and threw her arms round the neck of her brother in a transport of sorrow. “ Fare ye well, Reginald—be as happy as thou art bountiful—be as happy as I am wretched.”

“ Though I shall not see ye,” replied the Jesuit, “ yet often shall ye hear of me—your condition shall be bettered, Constance ; doubt it not—farewell.”

He drew his hat over his eyes, and walked out of the cottage, followed by Sparandam, who, totally unmoved by this scene, had busied himself in shrouding his fine habit beneath his own large military cloak. The valet, however, who was not made of such impenetrable stuff as the German, drew his hand across his eyes, and nodded to the dame as he quitted the cottage, with a sober and awed kind of aspect, which shewed that though he dreaded her goblin-like appearance, he gave her credit for being possessed of human affections.

As they left the woodhead the moon shone with dazzling splendour upon the low and embowered cottage, and shed a portion of light even into the avenues of the wood, which on all sides diverged from it. The wife of the woodman watched their forms with eager attention as they receded, and when she could see them no longer, she closed the door, and in great haste followed their footsteps. But though she walked at a rate that seemed likely to exceed that at which her brother and his companions had set out, she did not overtake them, nor even come within sight or hearing of their progress; and she therefore concluded that they had mistaken the avenues, and had gone either to the right or left, instead of keeping straight forward. Fearless, therefore, of falling into their company, she pressed on through the nighest cuts she was acquainted with, and in a quarter of an hour came within sight of the venerable towers of Haddon; and she had scarcely recognized the abode of her youth, and entered upon a train of thought which placed her once more

within its hospitable walls, when her ears were alarmed with the loud cries, and the clashing weapons of men in combat.

“Holy virgin!” cried the woman, springing forward with an agility which was more the effect of her mental than her bodily strength, “he has fallen into their hands. Blessed Saint Michael, help him.”

She now dashed through the trees, instead of keeping within the avenues, and, attracted by the sound of the combat to the spot where the outlaw and Stanley were engaged, came close to the edge of the wood, and breaking a large branch from an oak, awaited firmly some chance of succouring, with this rude weapon, the hero of her affection. Fortune, unfavourable to the prowess of the outlaw, laid him, as our readers have seen, at the feet of his ruthless adversary, and the timely interference of Dame Ollerenshaw alone saved him from certain death. By an effort, the outlaw in his turn, became master of his adversary’s life, but without con-

sidering whether it was better to make sure of Stanley's death or not, the wife of the poacher hurried her inmate away from the spot, fearful alone that an overpowering assistance would be brought to the aid of the soldier, or at least that they would be surprised by the arrival of Sparadam and his companions.

And the event proved the woman's sagacity; for Stanley, who was merely stunned by the blow which he had received from his rival, had not recovered its effect before the German colonel, the Jesuit, and his own valet made their appearance. They had missed the avenue which led direct to Haddon; but, after wandering about a short time, had again struck into it, and made up for lost time by an increase of speed. As they came nearer the hall too, their attention, like Dame Ollerenshaw's, was aroused by the noise of the conflict, and they would probably have reached the spot in time to have secured the outlaw, if any of them had known the direction through the wood, instead of making half the circuit of the hall. But when

they came upon the ground whence they judged the noise proceeded, they could perceive nothing ; for in his assault upon the outlaw, Stanley had driven him close to the trees. The outlaw's rescue and his own catastrophe had taken place within their dark shade, which now partially concealed his body. A single ray of the moon, darting through the upper branches of the trees, fell upon the blade of Stanley's sword, which he still retained firmly within his grasp, and the glitter of the steel discovered him to his friends.

“ Lebensblut ! ” cried the German, “ here is a dead man.”

“ 'Fore heaven, it is my master,” cried Ridgway, stooping down and unbuttoning his doublet ; “ help me, gentlemen, to bear him into the house.”

“ Does he bleed ? ” said the German. “ Where's his hurt ? ”

“ I see no blood, noble sir,” replied the valet ; “ he bleeds inwardly—raise him gently, sirs—perhaps he is not yet gone.”

The motion of raising his body from the ground restored the animation of

Stanley, who sprang upon his feet, as a man risen from a dream, and, with a savage countenance, held out his rapier in a posture of defence.

“ Well comrade,” cried the German bluntly, “ what are ye for? not going to assault friends.”

“ Friends !” replied the soldier, slowly recovering his recollection, and keeping the point of his sword still extended as a guard against surprise, “ who are ye? By my life, Sparandam and Father Paul ! Ridgway, knave, lend me thine arm, — have ye him fast, or has he escaped my revenge?”

“ Whom mean ye?” answered the German.

“ I mean that ruffian, that cudgel-player, the outlaw,” returned Stanley. “ Is not my head swelled into the size of a huge pumpkin?”

“ Pumpkin !” replied Sparandam, “ no ; I see nothing amiss in thy head, — what ! you have been at sharps, and this woodland squire played his sword and buckler against thy rapier.”

“ Play’d the devil !” cried Stanley ; “ no man, he lay on this green turf at my foot, and my point was at his gorge, when that accursed hag, — thy sister, sir Jesuit, if she be so, thrust herself between us.”

“ Now !” ejaculated Sparandam turning to the Jesuit with a smile of self-gratulation, “ I did not misdoubt her for nought. The witch led us astray by her devilment, on purpose that she might have time to perform her work.— Well, Ned, how then.”

“ Cursed be she, witch or fiend,” exclaimed Stanley ; “ for the rascal took advantage of her stickling, and with a blow of an oaken cudgel, which the woman help’d him withal, laid me senseless, as ye found me.”

“ By St. Hugo,” cried the German, “ I should have done well if I had drawn blood upon her as earnest of my new dagger — why didst thou not drive thy weapon into her unnatural body ?”

“ I would I had,” answered Stanley ; “ for then the villain could not have

escaped me — but by my life I'll now hunt him throughout England — neither woods, nor castles, nor sanctuaries, shall conceal him."

"How came ye to meet here at this time?" said the Jesuit. "Your suspicions have been confirmed. The outlaw came to visit his mistress, and you detected him."

"Ye shall know the whole story to-morrow," answered Stanley; "now let us in. I will introduce ye to my honourable friend. He already knows ye from my report, as you do him. Ye will be the less strange in your greeting. Ridgway, go on and get the gate open."

The valet ran off, and Stanley and his companions walked leisurely after him. On arriving at the gate they found the servants somewhat alarmed at the noises that had been heard, of which they could by no means divine the cause; and they were the more surprised when they not only saw two strangers accompany the valet of Edward Stanley, but that personage himself, whom they had seen at supper, and supposed to

be at this moment soundly asleep in his bed. But although they were thus astonished and confounded, they were too prudent and respectful of their master's guests to make any comment upon that which certainly seemed incomprehensible. They could not forbear, however, to look upon one another with an aspect of somewhat like incredulity, a stupid sort of wonderment, which dares not to inquire into the cause of that which it cannot fathom. — The soldier and his companions, leaving their domestics to their speculations, proceeded across the court into the hall, which they found naked and deserted as it had been left several hours before by the family. The fire was nearly out, all that remained of it being centered in a faggot, or what was then called a clog of wood; but by the exertions of Ridgway and some of the servants, who came from the porter's hatch, the latent embers were blown into a ruddy flame.

“Have your honours any horses?” said a groom, entering the hall.

“No;” answered Stanley, “nor asses either — get thee gone, knave. — That fellow would know whence ye came if he had face enough to ask the question. Ho, Ridgway! if any of Sir George’s family ask thee how these gentlemen got hither, say they came from London with some lord who left them at Bake-well — do ye hear — or if thou canst hatch some lie of better invention, do so; spare not thy wit.”

“Can ye not find us a bottle of canary or old sack for a turn,” said the German. “This walk hath made me dry.”

“Ridgway!” said Stanley. “do thou look into the knight’s parlour. You will find some wine in the cooler — bring it hither, and set it before these gentlemen, while I seek the knight. Tarry until I return. I will be as speedy as a young heir going to take possession of his estate.”

The valet having procured some wine from Sir George’s parlour, the German emptied nearly half a bottle of sack into a large cup, and, applying it to

his mouth, drank it off to the honour of his new host and fresh quarters; but the Jesuit refused to join in the toast or the potation of his companion.

CHAP. II.

Mark me, young soldier ! She is thine. I would not
For the redemption of my life and land,
If they lay forfeit to the law's extremity,
Gainsay this act. She's thine, I say—
Thy bride — thy wife. No longer is she mine.
I do assign her to thee with like loyalty
I would transfer a chattel.

THE REFORMADO CAPTAIN.

THE German had not offered many libations to his new penates, when the tread of several persons was heard upon the staircase, and the knight of Had-don, grasping the wrist of his daughter Dorothy, and accompanied by Edward Stanley, entered the hall. The countenance of the knight, which even the presence of unknown guests could not temper, exhibited marks of fiery indignation ; whilst his lovely daughter, drowned in tears and pale with apprehension, hung like a drooping lily upon his arm.

“Come on, thou piece of treachery,”

cried Sir George, dragging his daughter forward ;—" come forward, and shew thy hypocritical visage to my guests ; henceforth I will not quit thee a moment, my eyes shall rest upon thee, and scare thy soul like the evil-sight. Sit down there, traitress, and see thou stir not, or by my father's soul, though thou art of my blood, I'll bathe my whinyard in thine."

The German and Father Paul now interrupted his indignation by advancing and saluting him.

" Ye are welcome to Haddon, my old friends," replied the knight, shaking them cordially by the hand. " Colonel Sparandam I am glad to see you. Worthy Monsieur le Compte, it is very long since we met. Be seated. I hope my followers have not neglected ye — but a misfortune hath befallen my house, and that must be my apology. Ho, villains," he cried aloud to the domestics, who had retired from the hall to the kitchen, " bring lights ; would ye have the hall of the Vernon like a sepulchre, or a chapel lighted for the requiem ?"

“Ah, Monseigneur !” said the Jesuit, “let us give no more of trouble than it is possible. We will do well for the night. It does not become us to intrude upon the matters of a family nature. By your leave we will retire.”

“No, by my troth you shall not,” replied Sir George ; “the whole world shall witness the shame of this rebel — this deceiver — this unnatural daughter. Ay, thou mayst weep for thy dishonour ; weep out thy false heart, and get a better, or thou art no child of mine. By my faith, my own blood and followers, the very children and vassals of my house, care not a jot for my life or honour. How comes it, ye sodden-headed villains,” he continued, to some of the domestics who brought in lights, “that there have been piping and catterwauling around this house o’ nights, and that ye could never hear ? — that a rascal, and cutpurse o’ the dark could bewitch my windows to fly open, and none of ye see him ? Answer, ye reckless knaves, or I’ll have ye beaten to death.”

One of the domestics, careful not to increase the anger of his passionate lord, replied, "that music had been heard by many of the servants, and it was pretty generally believed that the outlaw was the performer; but they were not aware of any intercourse that subsisted between him and the lady Dorothy, further than Sir George knew himself."

"Ha! had I listened to that rumour," said the knight, "and laid hands upon that audacious villain, I had done right. But I placed a foolish confidence in thee, girl, and thou hast repaid me for it as every doting fool ought to be rewarded. But it is not yet too late for revenge; he that contemns my power must fly far to escape it. Hark ye, knaves, let horses be saddled for pursuit of this traitor by day-break; and see that rascal Olle-renshaw's cottage destroyed stock and stone."

The afflicted damsel, at this severe command, held forth her hands in an attitude of supplication; but her father paid no attention. He however reflected that the wife of the woodman was the

sister of his colleague, and therefore countermanded his orders so far as related to the cottage. "Unto thee, Ned Stanley," continued Sir George, "I owe all that is left of my reputation, perhaps my life—unto thee I owe the chastisement of the presumptuous bully that durst despise my vengeance."

"You owe me nothing, noble knight," replied the artful soldier; "the outlaw and I were upon a private quarrel; he underwent my challenge, and the time sorted for our duel. But, fair Dorothy, doubt not, would have seen and deplored her weakness. Had I known of this romance, and suffered it to pass for the time, my hopes of proving a successful wooer would not have fallen a jot."

"What!" exclaimed Sir George with affected astonishment, "wouldst thou still marry her? wouldst thou, shamed and blurred as she is, rebel-spotted and disgraced, accept her for thine honourable wife?"

"Ay, and be thankful to heaven for the gift," answered Stanley.

"Then take her, she is thine," said

Sir George; “from this hour I shake myself clear of her, and right glad am I to ’scape with my honour unsoiled. Stand up, Dorothy, and give him thy hand, he is thine husband.”

“Oh, no, not mine,” cried the damsel in affright; “he shall never be my husband. Cast me off, disclaim me, forget I ever drew the breath of life — let me live in misery and in contempt — I will abye all, rather than marry him.”

“What,” exclaimed her father, “doest thou cavil at my word? has thy treachery been detected, which ought to humble thee to the dust; and doest thou still stand upon thine inclination? I prithee do not anger me more, I am already somewhat heated.”

“Heaven knows I would obey you if I could,” replied the damsel; “but you shall not say I deceived you further, by promising to accept this gentleman, when I never intend to marry him. My mind is made — I will never wed him.”

“I will not ask thee again,” said her father; “thou shalt be questioned by the priest at the altar.”

“And I will answer solemnly, No,” replied Dorothy; “I will not record my own disloyalty.”

“Wilt thou discover the name of thy paramour?” cried her father sternly, “and so redeem thy disloyalty.”

“I pray ye forgive me,” replied Dorothy; “I should but prove more base and abject; I will not gainsay that which ye have seen and heard; but further, tortures should not wring from me. That I have done aught dishonorable, pardon me if I deny; at least further than holding an intercourse unknown to you — but do with me as seems good to you. I have nothing more to say.”

“No, thou hast said enough!” replied Sir George; “but I have done with thee; thou art no more mine. — I will but be thy gaoler until thou art married to this noble youth, then let him look to the taming of thee. — Ho, knaves! some of ye prepare an inner chamber; doth the lady Margaret’s room look upon the court?”

A domestic answered in the affirmative.

“Thou shalt lie with her,” continued the knight; “no more of your star-gazings by night, and your labyrinths by day. By St. Michael, if Father John were not so religious, I should mightily suspect him of being privy to this plot.”

“You would wrong him,” said Dorothy, “he is ignorant of it wholly.”

“So much the better for him that thou hadst vanity enough to fix thine own destiny without seeking his counsel,” returned her father with a sneer. “What, wench, was not thy fortune in life of as high import as Greek and Latin? curse upon them both, their villanous fables have distraught thy wits. I trow thou didst deem this green-garb’d outlaw with his vile ballad the god Apollo making love to thee in Lycian measures. Beshrew Apollo and the outlaw too. I would the god would consume the thief. But rise, girl, and attend me. Colonel Sparandam and Monsieur; command here as the lords of the mansion. Edward Stanley, I leave these gentlemen to your attentions; this wilful girl obliges me to quit you too soon.”

“Mention not an apology, my good lord,” replied the Jesuit, “we shall be in hands very good. But we shall do best to go now to our repose.”

“Not until we have finished the sack,” cried Sparandam; “I have sworn to drain every bottle in honour of our old acquaintance.”

“Do so, my noble colonel,” said Sir George, shaking him heartily by the hand; for in the German’s attachment to the bottle he cordially sympathised. “Enjoy yourselves; there is good wine and plenty of it hard by; do not stint yourselves to the remnant before ye, but bestir those knaves for a supply; I will challenge ye heartily on the morrow.”

The knight of Haddon then left the hall, attended by his daughter, whom he conveyed to the chamber of her sister; and having thrust her into it, locked the door, and carried away the key.

Whilst the knight was engaged in securing his daughter, the German colonel called for a servant, and obtained his assistance in drawing off his boots. He then unbuckled his belt, and light-

ened himself of his sword and dagger, which he laid upon the table ; and drawing his high-backed chair to the side of the hall fire, gulped down cup after cup of sack and canary until his wits staggered under the flood ; and though both of his companions were anxious that they should retire to rest, he continued his debauch without paying any attention to their often repeated counsel that he would conclude his potations.

“ Thou hast sure drunk enough,” said Stanley ; “ four bottles have broke bulk since thou didst sit down, and how many before St. Barnaby does not know.”

The German made no reply, but by singing the commencement of the famous old Flemish song,

“ Hop, hop, Wilkin, hop Wilkin,

“ England is mine and thine.”

“ Curse upon thy folly,” cried Stanley, whose eyes darted fire ; “ if Sir George Vernon heard thee sing that d—d bravado, he would have thee thrown from the lantern of the high tower.”

“ Colonel Sparandam,” said the Jesuit, “ I pray ye let us repair to rest.”

“ Rest,” replied the German ; “ I am not wearied man, except of thy importunence. And thou, Ned Stanley, art as milky a sop at a cup of wine, as ever told a long story to save his liver. Sit ye down, Master Edward, or Oberstlieutenant Stanley, as thou wast dubbed at Gravelines, and Monsieur le Comte, as thou art dubbed at Haddon, sit ye down ; never sunder a man and his liquor : and what say ye about jolly Wilkin ? ’tis as good a song as was ever heard in camp or city.”

“ It may be, to sing among the brutes of Flanders,” replied Ned Stanley ; “ but not in the hall of an English knight.”

“ Brutes of Flanders !” cried the drunken German, “ I would thou wert i’ the throng of a Bruges mob—they would brutify thee until thou wert civiler by the half—but let it pass—nevertheless, England is but England, good fellows ; and all’s pelfry to the true soldado.”

“ Pelfry !” cried Stanley with a sneer.

“ Ay, pelfry, raub und plunderung,” cried the Colonel. “ Himmelsdonner,

man! what have we to do to fight for you? I am no irrende-ritter."

"Be at peace, Colonel Sparandam," said the Jesuit anxiously; "you are to blame to utter such absurdity—you talk idly—you know not what."

"By my faith, father, he is sincere," cried Stanley;—"wine hath discovered his heart; Sparandam would sooner ply his sickle in the wealthy counties of England, than the often reaped provinces of France and Germany."

"Thou'rt a devilish good diviner, oberstlieutenant," returned Sparandam; "I would reap where there is chance of a good harvest—here's to the first stroke that is stricken in merry England." He drained his cup in a trice, and, perceiving that his companions intended not to pledge him, he bawled out, "Drink, sirs, or o' my conscience I'll switch ye with my sword belt."

"D—n thy toast," cried Stanley; "let's have no swaggering."

"May I be carried by a broken lance," cried the German, gnashing his teeth with fury, and drawing his dagger from

the scabbard ; “ may I be cut down by a sutler, if I brook this insult. D—n my toast ! ”

“ Ay,” cried Stanley, pushing him back in his chair, from which he endeavoured to rise ; “ if thou wilt shew thy teeth, find a dog to match thee. If thou art not quiet with thy cups, I’ll order these knaves to carry thee to bed.”

The German, at this peremptory speech, after looking some moments at Stanley, filled himself another cup of wine, and drank it off in silence. He then seemed to meditate some matter with great attention, and rising from his seat with great agility, before Stanley could prevent him, he pushed his fellow-soldier from him with an exertion of strength that he could not resist, and brandished his sword above his head with fierce gestures. The Jesuit speedily got out of his way ; but Stanley stood his ground, and asked him what he meant.

“ I mean to wash out thy insult,” cried the colonel, “ in thy blood. I invite thee to mortal combat ; if thou dost

not answer me, I will write thee a coward and a dog on every post in Flanders."

"Thou shall not waste thy time," returned Stanley, drawing his rapier; "but lay aside thy dagger—point to point is fair duel, and thy weapon is longest too; measure for measure—if I have the shorter sword I choose my ground. Monsieur le Comte, do us the favour to compare our weapons, and take that knife into thy keeping."

Stanley winked to the Jesuit, who instantly received his sword, and, after a slight hesitation on the part of the German colonel, his also.

"There, now Monsieur le Comte," said Stanley, laughing, "we will retire, and leave Monsieur le Colonel to his reflections."

"What! feind! tenfel! hund!" cried the German, in a great rage; "coward—I'll proclaim thee—I'll varnish thee over as a finished poltroon—a sorry hare-hearted scoundrel—a beast of burthen, that will bear a vocabulary of villanous names rather than fight a plain thrust."

The German, however, was obliged to slake his anger with another cup of wine ; for he found, that instead of raising the anger of his companion by his vituperation, he merely excited his mirth. But the furious character of his countenance speedily subsided into the broad and stolid marks of ebriety ; and, seating himself again in his chair, he speedily composed his anger to sleep. He was in this state carried to his chamber by the servants, and put to-bed by the direction of Stanley, who, having also conducted the Jesuit to the room appointed for him, retired to his own apartment, and sought to get some rest previous to his starting in pursuit of the outlaw.

The morning dawned with a beauty perhaps peculiar to this mountainous country. The mists drew up gradually to the tops of the hills, and, after hovering around like the muslin turban of a Moor upon his swarthy forehead, dispersed, and left their naked heads distinctly portrayed upon the grey sky : as yet the sun had not risen ; but those of the knight's followers who, in compliance with his

orders, had prepared to pursue the outlaw, reposed great confidence in their provincial adage,

Ruddy e'en and morning grey,
Sure betoken a fair day.

And in accordance with the signs of this rustic astronomy, the sun burst forth, and "warmed the nations with redoubled ray;" but, as it often happens, the power of this luminary served to obscure that beauty which his presence alone could embellish.

The heat of the sun drew up the vapours of the night, and speedily begot a dense and somewhat chilling fog, which defaced the foreground of the picture, and obliterated the perspective. The serpentine course of the river was now lost, like the tide of Mirza, in the mist, and even the tall spire of Bakewell church, which forms a prominent and beautiful object from Haddon, was invisible. This, however, the retainers knew would not last long; for when the sun shines with greater brilliancy than ordinary, the heavier is the exhalation, and the shorter its duration,

The party of Sir George Vernon's retainers, who awaited the command of Edward Stanley, amounted to about twenty men. They were clad in the green forest garb, being the knight of Haddon's keepers, wore the badge of their lord, and were armed with weapons of service, instead of the short hunting swords that they bore in common. Soon after the sun had risen, Stanley made his appearance, accompanied by the knight of Haddon, whose pale and yet furious countenance shewed that he had obtained little repose during the short time he had been in bed, and that his recollection of the insult offered to his power was not at all diminished. He and Stanley spoke together a considerable time, the latter frequently pointing towards that part of the court where the unfortunate Dorothy was confined, whilst the violent gesticulation of her father betrayed his appetite for a full and destructive revenge. The cool and sarcastic manner of Stanley, whose discourse, though eked out in broken hints and parcel arguments, seemed to incite rather

than repress the anger of the knight, formed a broad contrast to his youthful and chivalrous appearance. He was clad in a habit of treble-piled green Genoa velvet, richly wrought with flowers and figures of silver, a dress which, bespeaking the taste of a court gallant, preserved a hunter-like fashion, which he was desirous of maintaining. He wore a plain grey beaver, with long, dark, and drooping feathers, as was then the mode for a riding dress, and was armed, as well with sword and dagger, as with a pair of petronels, or horse pistols, at his saddle-bow. If you observed the face and figure of this young cavalier, without scanning the character of his countenance, nothing could be more gay, more chivalrous, more amiable. He has been likened, both in person and courage, to that military French worthy who fell in the arms of victory at Ravenna—the youthful and renowned Gaston de Foix ; but how unlike in that noble frankness, that patriotism, that warmth of character which possessed the Frenchman, let a comparison between the memoirs of these rival heroes declare.

The one was all honour, the other all dishonesty. Defoix would have scorned disguise, whatever advantage hypocrisy might have gained him; Stanley disdained the use of no means, however base and unworthy, which had the power of serving even a temporary purpose. Their valour and ambition of warlike glory were equal; but the means by which each pursued his end were as opposite as their characters. In short, the name of Defoix is allied with all that is great, and admirable, and heroical, whilst that of Edward Stanley must for ever be coupled with all that is villanous and detestable.

When he had concluded his conversation with Sir George Vernon, who ordered his retainers to put themselves entirely under his command, and to obey him as they would himself, Stanley mounted his horse, which his valet, Ridgway, had brought into the court, and, waving his hand to the knight, he struck his spurs fiercely into the sides of his steed, and galloped into the park, followed by the others, and took a broad avenue which led to the cottage of Olle-

renshaw, at the woodhead. The birds, which had begun already to form in harmonious quires, and the deer, which were snorting and leaping wantonly in the sun, were scared by the furious advance of the horsemen ; whilst it frequently happened that the horses were startled by the sudden darting of a stag from his lair, or the whirring flight of a pheasant, as it shot across their path. But nothing could impede the race of Stanley, who, urging his horse to speed upon the velvet turf, did not draw rein until he arrived at the door of the woodman's cottage. He had outridden his companions, who were not so well mounted as himself ; but without any fear, and with his natural arrogance, he kicked the door open with his foot, and discovered the figure and countenance of Constance within the cabin. She was seated in her usual place within the chimney nook, and at her side was a table, whercon lay the fragments of some victuals, which it seemed she had been eating. She was quite alone, and did not seem surprized at the sight of the soldier.

How accursed
“Now, ~~devil's~~ dam!” cried Stanley, taking a pistol from his saddle, and clapping the muzzle to her head, “where is that rascal thou didst rescue from my vengeance?—tell me speedily, or, by my soul, I’ll splinter thy misshapen head into ten thousand atoms.”

“Thy soul!” replied the woman, with a stern sneer. “Talk of my beauty! If thou ever hadst a soul, it’s been withered long ago. Get thee gone—I know nought of thy foe.”

“I will make thee know, cursed witch!” cried Stanley, with violent fury. “I will find his retreat, if thou dost hoard it in thy heart.”

“Pluck it out then,” cried the woman, starting up from her chair. “Thou shall not know from me, save thou canst get it so.”

The ruffian made no reply, but struck her fiercely on the shoulder with the sharp-edged stock of his petronel, and the blow forced her back into her chair, which saved her from falling to the ground. But this act of violence had not the effect Stanley desired, that of

terrifying her into obedience; for she rose up again from the chair, and cried "Murther me, if thou wilt. I say murther me. I set thee light. I scorn thee—I do; a poor miserable woman scorns a high-born fellow like thee, and puts thee to shame. I know well enough, man, where thy foe is—I could find him thee at murk midnight. But he's safe—he shall be safe for thee and thy consorts; a red murrain on ye all."

"~~Don~~ thee for a black thrice-sold witch," cried Stanley, tearing off a woollen cap or hood which covered her head, and seizing her by her hair, which was of uncommon length; "I will unmask thee,—'scape the barrel, I will rip thy heart out. Thou shalt not escape thy doom, though thou hast yet done fire and faggot. Thou dost not know me, or thou wouldst not have awaited my vengeance."

"I would—I have," cried the woman, with scornful determination. "I have been warned by the son of one who played the lion where thou didst play the wolf,

the bloody-fanged brute of the slaughter. I knew thee; but I feared thee not."

"Let thy lion stalk abroad," cried Stanley, "the wolf will not fly him. But thou shalt find me more fierce than the hungry tiger, more ravenous than the wolf that seeks his prey upon the frozen snow, if thou doest not quickly bewray thy secret."

"Not though thou hadst power over my soul boot to my body," answered the woman with indomitable steadiness; "I am prepared for all thou canst do. I will die of the mind I'm in."

"Hark ye, woman," said Stanley; "I would not defile myself with thy blood, for it is baser than the ditch puddle. I have moreover reasons for wishing thee to live; but as I have life and strength, and as I may die unshriven and unab-solved of sin, I will but give thee one minute to answer—if thou wilt not reveal the shelter of that villain who lay at my mercy."

"Why didst thou not slay him," cried the woman sarcastically, "if he lay at thy mercy?"

“ I will slay thee,” cried Stanley, dragging her into the middle of the cottage by her hair. “ That taunt hath sealed thy fate.”

He was on the point of making good his threat, and had already cocked his pistol, the sight of which was endured with marvellous indifference by his victim, when her daughter, the pretty Rose Ollerenshaw, appeared on the ladder from the loft above, and promised to reveal to him the retreat of the outlaw, if he would release her mother.

“ Ha, is it thou, wench ?” cried Stanley, at once calming his rage, and loosening his hold upon the dame ; “ come down.”

“ Nay, but ye will not harm us,” said Rose, with trembling apprehension.

“ No, silly fool,” exclaimed Stanley ; “ come down.”

At this moment his party arrived, and dismounted at the door of the cottage.

“ Here, take this hag into your keeping,” cried Stanley to some of the men, who instantly secured her ; “ and now, pretty Rose, I must take you to task.

And first, where is this precious knave, the outlaw?"

"He has left the wood-head, I mean this place," replied Rose, descending the ladder with fearful steps.

"And whither is he gone?" said Stanley.

"That I know not," replied Rose.

"How," exclaimed Stanley sternly, "thou doest trifle."

"Nay, o' my life," cried the damsel, falling on her knees, and lifting up her hands, "my mother left him but two hours bye-past in Chatsworth Park. He durst not come here for fear of your worship."

"Come, Rose," said the traitor, raising her up, and circling her waist with his arm, "put aside thy fears; thou hast no reason to fear me. Tell me what is become of this cowardly rascal, and I will make thy fortune. Thou shalt become mine own lady, and live as daintily as the daughters of Sir George Vernon."

"I cannot tell ye further," answered Rose; "my mother left him in the park;

whither he is gone I can no more tell than yon black jack in the chimney."

"You wonnot," replied Stanley, with a fierce look. "One more question; where are your father and brother?"

"They have not been at home since yesterday morn," replied the damsel.

Stanley, however, ordered a strict search to be made in every part of the cottage and out-buildings; but he could find no trace to the retreat either of the outlaw, the woodman, or his son.

CHAP. III.

Fear no more the lightning flash,
Nor th' all-dreaded thunder stone;
Fear no slander, censure rash,
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan.'

CYMBELINE.

WHEN Stanley had completed his unsuccessful investigation, he ordered his companions to remount; and having resolved to take dame Ollerenshaw and her daughter with him in pursuit of the outlaw, he placed Rose behind his own servant Ridgway, whilst her mother burthened the horse of one of Sir George's retainers. Thus mounted, the party changed its course, one of the retainers leading the way; and crossing Haddon Park, proceeded towards Chatsworth.

Stanley did not take this road with any certainty that it would lead to the retreat of his rival; but as he perceived it was not in his power, either by fair means or foul, to overcome the resolution

of the mother, he was constrained to make the best use of that little intelligence which he could draw from the daughter. The account given by Rose, so far as it went, was probable enough; for Stanley never expected to find the outlaw at the woodman's cottage, nor even the dame herself; but not knowing whither else to go, he turned his horse in that direction, being assured that if chance afforded him no success there, he should lose little time in taking the wood-head in his circuit. He had also heard that the outlaw frequently resorted to Chatsworth Park, where, among the hills, there were many such cabins as Ollerenshaw's, that would afford him shelter; and yet it was likely that Rose, a young and giddy female, was not sufficiently in his secret to know the identical spot of his retreat. But as it was plain, even by her own confession, that her mother was acquainted with it, and as he trusted some symptoms of her alarm on approaching the place would betray it to him, he resolved that she should accom-

pany him. His companions, the servants of Sir George Vernon, knew every cottage and every person both in Haddon and Chatsworth Parks, and he told them he should trust to their knowledge to conduct him to the most likely places for the discovery of the outlaw.

Advancing at a smart pace, they crossed the Wye over a wooden bridge, which shook beneath the weight of a single man and horse, for no more durst pass it at a time; and then slackening their speed, they gradually ascended the hill called Calton, which formed the northern boundary of Haddon Park, and rises by a gentle ascent from the hall to the distance of a mile and a half. This hill was not then, as it is now, planted thickly with trees, so as to form a fine preserve for game; but was much more naked at the top than nearer to the hall. It was, in fact, a plain piece of forest ground, such as is the open and more barren part of Chatsworth Park at this day, here and there studded with clumps of oaks, elms, or thorn-trees; the former of which were dwarfed from

the height of their elevation, and the greater part thickly overgrown with underwood, which served as a shelter for the deer. On attaining the top of the hill the prospect again expanded, and opened to view a highly beautiful and romantic scene. The park of Chatsworth, occupying the whole of a grand valley, and the hills that bounded it on both sides, lay before them, with the majestic Derwent flowing through the midst; and on the farther bank, at a short distance from the water, stood the mansion, the erection of which was begun by Sir William Cavendish, ancestor of his grace the Duke of Devonshire, who died about five years before, but lately completed by his widow, the afterwards celebrated Countess of Shrewsbury. The house was not, perhaps, either so large or so magnificent as the present (which our readers will remember was built on the scite of the old one by the first Duke of Devonshire), but it was of a fashion in architecture, which, if one may judge from his grace's seat at Hardwick, which was built soon after by the Coun-

tess, was more suited to the genius loci, the wild and stern, though romantic, aspect of the scenery. Hills rise almost on every side, and form a mighty amphitheatre around the hall of Chatsworth; detached rocks burst forth in every part, and deep ravines intersect the face of the park, breaking it into a thousand beautiful irregularities. At this time those plantations of forest-trees, which now form so noble a back ground to the hall, and rise up to the very crown of the hill, spreading their sable wings to a considerable distance on either side, were not there; but the hill exhibited a bald and barren front, bearing only heath and bracken. There were, however, fine plantations of ancient oaks and elms, set in detached masses in various situations, which had probably stood there since the Conquest, and which are standing there still. It was usual, in hunting, for those who bore bows to take their stand behind some of these clumps, and to shoot at the deer as they were chased by the hunters that were mounted; but, for the pleasure and accommodation of the

ladies, two hunting towers were erected ; one on an elevated station rearward of the mansion, which commanded a fine view over the whole park, and the other nearer the river, which enabled them, when the sport was hot in the valley, to enjoy a nearer sight of it. This tower afterwards became the principal resort of Mary Queen of Scotland, when residing at Chatsworth, a prisoner in the hands of George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who married the widow of Sir William Cavendish. At her desire a garden was laid out on the top of the lower tower, which was also encompassed with a moat to prevent her escape ; and to this day it retains the name of the Bower of the Queen of Scotland. After casting his falcon glance over this magnificent scene, Edward Stanley, who was at the head of the party, reined up his horse, and inquired from Rose where her mother had parted with the outlaw.

“ It was nigh this spot !” replied the damsel, “ meet o’ the edge of Chatsworth park.”

“ And what direction did he take ? ” said Stanley. “ The villain durst not go nigh the house. ”

“ I know no more, ” replied Rose. “ She would not tell me where he hid. ”

Stanley was now obliged to consult some of his party, who counselled him to keep on the high ground, among the hills and broken rocks, where there were many cottages occupied by shepherds and woodmen, with whom the outlaw had doubtless concealed himself. Following this advice, Stanley turned his horse to the right, and keeping on the tops of the hills, began to make the circuit of the park. Still, however, his eyes wandered in all directions, scanning the valley from one end to the other, and taking note of all objects that appeared near or remote. He ordered the wife of the woodman to be brought to his side, and took an occasional but penetrating survey of her countenance. But at present it exhibited a settled apathy, which baffled every attempt at an elucidation of her mind. She either did not dread

the discovery of her late inmate, or she concealed her fears ; and even when the retainers searched several cottages where they imagined the outlaw would take shelter, she still preserved her countenance unaltered by any emotion. The patience of an ordinary man, knowing that this woman possessed the secret of his foe's retreat, would have failed under her stubborn silence ; but Stanley, who knew if he hanged her upon the next tree, which, in contemplation of his speedy rebellion, he would not have feared to do, that all hope of learning the hiding-place of his rival would be destroyed, too heartily sought his death, to abandon the means of procuring it by gratifying his passion upon such a wretched creature as the wife of Ollerenshaw. He therefore smothered his anger, promising himself an ample vengeance upon the woman at a future time, and contented himself with taking such note of her aspect, as would enable him to judge, by its variations, whether he was near or far off the place of her protegee's abode. For some time she rode by his side,

wearing a look of derision, as if she mocked the fruitless trouble of her fierce companion, and set his search for the outlaw, and his vengeance against herself, equally at defiance ; but suddenly her countenance changed, and she leaned upon the horseman behind whom she sat, to prevent her from falling. Stanley, whose eye at that moment rested on her, and who perceived, from her altered manner, that something was in the wind, darted his penetrating glances in every direction. They were now in a part of the park which was thickly planted on the hilly side, for which reason they had been obliged to descend from the height and skirt the wood, that they might keep in the open ground ; and at short distances were clumps of oaks, which spotted the side of the hill, nearly to the edge of the river. Across these scattered masses of wood Stanley had looked, but vainly, for the object which had caused the emotion of the woman ; and he had almost concluded that it was affected for the purpose of drawing their attention to a spot where search would

be fruitless, when, at the distance of half a mile, emerging from behind one of the clumps, he descried the green garb, the hat and plume of his rival.

“Ha! the hart is roused!” cried Stanley, galloping off. The rest of the horsemen put onward after their leader, as fast as they could urge their horses; but their speed could not measure pace with his, and he left them far behind. Dame Ollerenshaw muttered prayers in silence, and invoked every saint she was acquainted with, to preserve the life of the outlaw; whilst the mind of her daughter, wrought up to the height of curiosity, was only eager to behold an end of the adventure. For some time the advance of Stanley was not perceived by his rival, who walked leisurely, occasionally turning his eyes towards Chatsworth; but when the sound of the horse’s hoofs reached his ears, and he beheld the furious charge of his adversary, and the more distant appearance of his followers, he darted away with great speed towards one of the thickets that was nearest to him, and disappeared from

the sight of Stanley. But the latter soon came up to the spot, and found that his foe had abandoned this position, and fled towards the wood that crowned the top of the hill. Thither he followed; and though the outlaw ran with amazing breath and speed, yet the courser of the soldier gained upon him considerably. The hill side was, nevertheless, so rugged and broken, that Stanley was obliged to slacken his speed, and the outlaw now made more ground than he could: he had the best of the race; and the soldier, fearing he should lose his prey, sprang from his horse, and ran on foot up the hill, grasping in his hand a petronal which he had taken from his saddle-bow. The outlaw's fate was now alarming, and his death imminent; but he might have escaped, had he not made one of those false doubles which betrays many a noble beast into the hands of the hunters. Instead of keeping a straight-forward course, or going to the north, by which he would have turned his back upon his pursuers, he chose, as if infatuated, to make his way along a level ledge of the

hill, which afforded him better ground to run indeed, but brought him into the front of Stanley's party, who judging, as they did not see either their leader or the outlaw return into the open park, that the latter had fled towards the heights, urged their horses against the hill, that they might cut off his flight, if he turned towards them, or pursue him if he crossed the ridge of the hill. At sight of them the outlaw appeared paralysed with terror. He hesitated, and stopped. The partisans set up a loud shout; and like a hare that is beset by the dogs, he doubled and fled the way he came. Arrived at the spot whence he diverged, he again began to ascend the hill; but Stanley was now close upon him.

“Fly for thy life,” cried the woman, who with the others were now within two hundred yards of the spot. “String thy nerves and thy heart—fly, bonny child—thy deathsman is on thee.”

At this moment the soldier levelled his murderous weapon, and fired at his luckless foe, who, shot between the

shoulders, fell back, and rolled down the hill, staining the flowery heath with his blood. The shot whizzed in the ears of the woman ; her eyes struck fire, and she fell senseless to the ground.

“ Dead, dead !” cried Stanley, striking his foot upon the body to prevent it from rolling further than where he stood ; “ that shot has gone home ; thou wilt never harbour again in Haddon Park, I’ll be sworn.”

“ Thou wilt harbour in hell for this deed,” cried the woman, rising up, and approaching the outlaw, upon whom she flung herself in great agony. “ Oh, my bonny bird, thy fair body is stained with thy heart’s blood—murthered, murthered art thou by an accursed hand—woe to it, foul fall it, and a woe ; thou that wert so kind and so bountiful, so meek even to the poor. But thou wilt be avenged, my child ; the hand that struck thee knew not thy gentle blood—he has pulled ruin on himself by this bloody deed.—Woe, woe !”

The lamentation of the woman was arrested by a deep groan, which issued

from the breast of the wounded man. Hitherto no one had looked upon his face ; but the dame, at this sound, started up, and turned him gently on his back. This act of charity she had no sooner performed, than she uttered a piercing shriek, and again fell backward. The face was not that of the gallant outlaw, but the pale visage of her brother, the fanatical Ashby.

“ What ! ” exclaimed Stanley, gnashing his teeth with rage, “ a carrion fox ’stead of a noble hart ! this vile fellow ’stead of my foe ! Curses on thee, villain ! thou hast met thy doom worthily.”

The fanatic opened his languid eyes, and turning a little on his side, endeavoured to speak.

“ I have met my doom ! ” said Ashby, in a voice almost inaudible ; “ long have I known I was to die by the hand of a Stanley — fate had spun my web — the warp and the woof were characterized with my bloody tragedy. To that end did I quit these hills, and seek the neighbourhood of Lathom, the country that gave birth to thee. — Ah, my heart —

there was no man of thy race at the hall of thy fathers — life was wearisome to me — I sped to the sea, and if thou hadst not letted me, the waves should have buried my misery.”

The wife of Ollerenshaw now recovered from her swoon, and supported her dying brother in her arms.

“ Well, doest thou remember,” continued Ashby, casting his eyes upward to Stanley, “ the scene were I next saw thee ? Ha, that moment ! death was then grateful to me — I deemed the hour of my fate arrived. Thy pistol-shot was the glad sound of my liberation — but I was wrong — my time was not come — I will not hang upon that which passed then or after — the word of an angel hath sealed my lips. — Oh ! that she was here to close my eyes, to take the last wring of this hand, which is now moistening with death.”

“ Thou art a hypocrite,” said Stanley ; “ for if thou hadst credited this fate thou talkest of, thou wouldst not have resisted my sword yesterday.”

“ I was not i’ the mood to die,” said Ashby, with a violent exertion; “ I trusted that the hour of my death was still distant — I say I know not what — I resisted thee yesterday — I fled thee to-day, when I saw thou didst hunt me as a partridge on the mountains. Wherefore I did so, ask me not. I was governed by a will more powerful than mine own — a fate was on me.”

“ It was, for I took thee for another,” said Stanley.

“ Well is it,” said the dying enthusiast; “ if my death may appease thee, I forgive thee my blood — thou wert but the instrument — let it warn thee to go no further in thy wrath.”

“ Yea, I am fated to slay the man I took thee for,” said Stanley, with a sneer.

“ Peradventure thou art the victim, and he the slayer,” replied Ashby; “ the issue can alone tell.”

“ Be it so,” returned the soldier contemptuously; “ if he vanquish me, I will be content to die.”

“ If he were to vanquish thee,” said

the fanatic, "thou wouldst brook nothing — thy proud heart would burst with shame. I, that am reft of every comfort, that know neither honour nor abasement, the persecuted of all, that knew not where to eat, nor where to lay my head, I can covet death as a good friend, a relief from misery and persecution — but thou, the rich and the gay, vaunted of among the nobles of the land — proud of a wicked heart, thy all is centred upon earth; life is all of pleasure that thy soul will taste: when thou hast turned thy back upon it, thou doest enter on a howling wilderness."

"It is but lately that thou didst condemn thyself to damnation," said Stanley; "the less wonder is it thou doest anathematize others."

"Yea," exclaimed the enthusiast, with a brightening look, "but I have had such a revelation as hath warmed my heart to better hopes. I do not curse thee, youth of a noble house — I bless thee, with my dying breath. What may be thy fate is not known to man; but may it be to return from thy wanderings

—to become a child of grace 'stead of the son of perdition thou art at this moment. Thou doest entrust thy soul to the care of the deceiver—thou doest cling to papal absolution for thy safety, which is a rotten staff. Can the word of man profit an unrepentant soul? Oh, be warned, son be warned, while there is yet an hour. The summer of life is but short—the yellow leaf doth fall quickly—if you devote the fruits of your youth to the wicked one, be assured the frosts of your age will not be received at the throne of eternity.”

“ Philip, Philip !” exclaimed the wife of the woodman, with streaming eyes, “ thy death is on thee ; slight not the faith of thy fathers.”

The enthusiast, with a look of astonishment, raised his eyes to the face of his sister, and with some exertion, said, “ Who art thou ? Thou doest speak to me as a familiar, and yet have thy features no place in my remembrance : thou doest talk of the faith of my fathers ; but if they had been blind of sight as they were of heart, would there have been

reason that I should despise the gifts of heaven, and extinguish mine own vision to obtain the deformity that disfigured them? Woman, die not in thy sins."

"Thou hadst once a sister," said the woman with much emotion; "doest thou not think her a heartless wretch, an unnatural kinswoman, that she hath not sought thee in thy wanderings, and taken thee home to her bosom?"

"A sister!" replied the enthusiast, in a faint and almost inaudible tone, which shewed the exertion he had made was too powerful for his strength, and that his end was near at hand. "I seem to remember somewhat — but it is shadowy — dim as these hills and dales. Methinks the sun is shining, but I feel not his warmth. I am cold, and my limbs are relaxing. Where am I? Are not these the lovely hills and the fair valleys of Chatsworth? Is not yon streaming light the silver-flowing Derwent? Oh! that I could cast one glance upon Haddon towers — one glance upon the fair faces within them! Oh! my blood freezes."

"Philip, I am thy sister!" cried the

woman ; “ I am Constance, who for fear of man’s wrath and the evil day hath abandoned thee to death. Say thou doest pardon me ? ”

But the spirit was at the ebb. The enthusiast heard nothing ; and the film of death grew gradually thicker upon his sight. He waved his hand that those who stood before him might stand out of the way, as if, even in expiring, he wished to catch a last, though overshadowed look, at the romantic scenery he had loved whilst living. But his impotency of understanding was bitterly bewailed by his sister, who in her agony invoked curses upon the head of his murderer.

“ Cursed be thou, manslayer,” cried she, shaking her withered arm at Stanley ; “ cursed be thou among thy kin, and among strangers. Be thy hand red for a mark and warning — be it red as the flames that will even now wither it in hell. Thou hast slain my kinsman ; may a bloody doom fall on him that most honours thy house. Be thou foiled in the dearest wishes of thy heart — thou

art now a traitor, become an outlaw and a vagabond — be thy end finished in contempt, thy name forgotten, thy fame lost like the mist of the morning. And if thou marry, be a hand fierce as thine own upon thy widow and thy children.”

The haughty soldier smiled contemptuously at this malediction, and, without making any reply, ordered some of the retainers to pursue his horse, which was grazing quietly lower down the hill. He himself ascended the point of an eminence which commanded a fine view of the dale, leaving the wife of the woodman to compose the features of her dying brother. Being naturally a man of sound constitution, as well as of great strength, the spirit of Ashby clung with tenacity to its mortal tenement, and the parting struggle by which it was at length ejected was maintained with horrible animation. Convulsions of the stormiest description seized upon the body, and to the last caused a vibration of the nerves which shook the departing enthusiast as if he had been a mechanical automaton agitated by wires; his countenance was

fearfully disfigured ; and his glassy eyes, bursting from their sockets, glared horribly upon the face of his sister, whose strength hardly enabled her to support his head upon her arm. At length the death-pang struck him, and with such thrilling agony that the body, half-sprang from the earth, fell and rebounded. A momentary rattle was in the throat and all was over. The enthusiast's body was a clod of the earth. His sister, without uttering a word, fell upon it, and for some time seemed to have joined his spirit in its flight. Rose, whose pallid features bespoke the terror with which this horrible spectacle had filled her, stood at a little distance from her mother with her hands clasped together ; whilst the sturdy followers of Stanley, with countenances which bore no testimony of approbation of their leader's atchievement, looked first upon the dead body, and then upon the man that had wrought his fall, with glances of indignation. Whilst they were yet in this situation, Stanley, whose horse had been brought him by the man he had set on its pur-

suit, vaulted into the saddle, and ordered the retainers to remount ; but instead of obeying him, they looked one at another as if to gather the resolution of each, and stood fast, and in silence.

“ Hear ye me, Sirs ?” cried Stanley, who observed the louring cloud upon their faces, and their silent communication ; “ mount and attend me — the villain I seek shall not escape, though this beldame raise the devil to his aid.”

The men whispered together for a few moments, and one of them approaching Stanley replied, that they were unwilling to go further with him until they knew the will of their lord upon that which had happened, inasmuch as by obeying his directions they should incur the penalty of being principals in this murder, which they not only did not desire but deeply lamented.

“ Has not your lord put ye under my command ?” said Stanley, laying his hand upon the stock of the pistol which remained undischarged ; “ are ye not to follow me where I lead, to do as I order, to obey my bidding ?”

“ We came out to apprehend an outlaw,” replied the spokesman, “ not to shoot innocent men.”

“ Dog !” cried Stanley with a vindictive and deadly scowl ; “ If thou wert not the vassal of my liefest friend, I would lay thy head beside yon churl’s on the heath.”

The man, fearful that Stanley would lodge the contents of the pectronel in his body with as little compunction as he had destroyed the fanatic, drew a step back, and shielded himself among his fellows ; but at this time it was not the desire of the sanguinary soldier to increase that odium which he perceived the death of Ashby had brought upon him among the retainers of the knight of Haddon. Their services, in the meditated rebellion, were too necessary, and their power of opposition too great, to suffer him to set them at defiance, and he therefore, though with little grace, permitted the man who addressed him to retire uninjured.

“ You say you will have your lord’s opinion upon my conduct,” said he, with

as calm a countenance as he could assume, “and I will have it upon your’s — be sure of it, sirs. Ye have done me wrong — I will be satisfied.” And before they could answer, he put spurs to his horse, and galloped off across the park towards Haddon.

In the meantime Dame Ollerenshaw had in some degree come to herself, and understanding from that which passed that the retainers not only disapproved of the bloody deed of their leader, but also, by their refusing to follow him, had, for this time at least, lessened the danger of the outlaw, she returned them many thanks, and declared herself bound to them for their kindness.

“But what must be done with the body?” said she, looking at it mournfully; “it must now have a resting place, though it wandered sorely while alive.”

“Sling it on my horse,” said the man that had spoken; “I’ll take it ye to the woodhead, Constance, and there ye must bury it. It will do no good to make a stir about it.”

His fellows assisted him to lay the body across his horse, and in this Richard-the-third style they returned to the woodhead.

CHAP. IV.

Mark ye the justice, whose big look of gravity
Doth ape the counsell'd spirit that it owes not !
How like an ass dressed in a lion's skin,
Whose ears o'erpeering the dread tyrant's mane
Betray the foolish and affected masker !

THE QUEEN'S COURTIER.

ALTHOUGH Edward Stanley did not relax the speed of his horse until he arrived at Haddon, he nevertheless only entered the court-gate just before the greater part of the retainers, who, knowing the ground much better than he, chose a much nearer path to the hall. The family was at breakfast, and Colonel Sparandam, who was scarcely recovered from his debauch of the preceding evening, and the Jesuit, were regularly installed as guests of Sir George Vernon. On Stanley's entry the knight of Haddon rose up to enquire the success of his expedition, the nature of which was plainly known to the company by the character of anxiety which pervaded

their countenances ; and no one seemed more concerned than Sir Thomas Stanley. He appeared in torment until he should be assured that his brother had been unsuccessful in his pursuit. Both Margaret and Dorothy Vernon were present ; the former breathing suspense, the latter pale with woe, and sickened with fearful anxiety. Stanley glanced upon the sisters as he entered the parlour, and bit his lip with vexation as he anticipated their triumph. Some of the guests, however, were touched with an eager curiosity to learn the event of the soldier's ramble, without any mixture of commiseration for the feelings of Dorothy Vernon. Such were his worship Sir Simon Degge, who almost relinquished his breakfast to swallow the news, and Colonel Sparandam, who, though not quite so much excited, earnestly awaited his comrade's tidings. The Jesuit, or Monsieur le Comte as he was now called, seemed on the contrary to partake of that sympathy which animated Sir Thomas Stanley, and very frequently fixed his eyes upon the sorrowing maiden with

an expression of mournful solicitude. These several shadows of feeling were not observed by Sir George Vernon, whose temper had not lost much of its keen edge by the night's repose.

"Well, Ned Stanley," he said, "where is this bold vagrant that sets law and honour at defiance? Is the heron struck?"

"No," replied Stanley, seating himself at the breakfast table, "he is still on the wing."

"What! on the wing," exclaimed Sir George in astonishment, "on the wing, and a fowler such as thou art quit the quest."

"I mean we did not raise him," said Stanley; "we never had sight of him."

"Then he has escaped," said Sir George; "he has avoided the country?"

"Went ye down to Edensor?" said Sir Simon Degge.

"No," replied Stanley, bluntly.

"Marry, and I marvel ye did not," continued the knight of Bowdon, "because Walter Needham, that follows the daughter of the woodman where this outlaw hath harboured, lives there."

“ Does he ?” said Stanley, very drily.

“ He does,” answered Sir Simon.

“ Very like,” returned Stanley, commencing his breakfast without further discussion.

“ Nay, marry, if it be a secret, be-shrew me if I want to know how ye sped,” cried Sir Simon. “ Hide it in thy reconditory to the day of doom, it will be no offence to me.”

Sir George Vernon now perceived that there was something in the breast of Stanley which he did not wish to speak of publicly, and ceased at once to make further inquiry. What the mystery was he had no clue to discover ; but he was too well assured of the courage and perseverance of his military colleague, as well as of his hatred against the outlaw, to doubt but that he had taken every means possible to discover his retreat.

In the meantime, while these reflections passed through the mind of Sir George Vernon, Sir Simon Degge, who sat very nigh to Dorothy Vernon, turned to her, and, in a tone of unfeeling common-place condolence, said, “ Fair Doro-

thy, sorrow not. If thou hast lost thy Theseus, thou shouldst not despair. Some god may still crown thee with the Gnossia corona. I will not say Bacchus, lest some wight, irreverent to the ancient mythology, should pervert my meaning, and aver I recommended to thee the solace of the drinking cup, which heaven forbid."

The maiden, though highly disgusted with this absurd address, made no reply, but dropped her eyes to the ground. Margaret Vernon, however, who sat next to her, turned to the knight with a good deal of indignation, and replied, "Sir Simon, I am sorry that I should be obliged to tell any guest of my father's that he meddles with that which does not concern him."

"Yea ; but sweet Margaret, this matter concerns me no little," replied the knight, drawing his chair closer to the sisters ; "inasmuch as I am myself a recognized suitor of the fair Dorothy ; and though with the vain and shifting race of gallants that this age of butterflies hath produced, your sister's falling off

might stand in the way of her advancement, yet be assured with me the matter is of little weight. I will take her for better and worse."

The countenance of Dorothy Vernon, during this indelicate speech, changed from white to red, and from red to white a dozen times, whilst her sister, flushed with anger, and incapable of finding words to interrupt the knight, surveyed him with a look of mingled contempt and rage. Sir Simon, unconscious of having said aught that was improper, and desirous of knowing the sentiments of his mistress on the subject he had touched on, paused a few moments for a reply; but finding that neither Dorothy nor her sister offered to speak, he continued—"I own some men of an over-nice nature, of a squeamish stomach, would say I ventured far; that I bought a pig in a poke, as the vulgar have it; but I heed not the scoffs of the world, the darts of ridicule draw no blood, and one may easily defend one's-self with the shield of indifference. So, sorrow not, gentle Dorothy, I say

again ; it is not a pasquil that will divorce me from mine intention."

Happily Sir Thomas Stanley, who had hitherto been engaged in conversation with the Jesuit, turned his eyes towards his mistress ; and observing, from her flushed countenance and compressed breathing, that she was in some way agitated, he drew near, and inquired the occasion of her emotion. Sir Simon Degge, who overheard the inquiry, instantly answered, that he had taken that opportunity of renewing his assurances to the lady Dorothy and her sister of his attachment to the former, which, however, did not appear to meet with the approbation of the lady Margaret. " She, peradventure, would prefer your brother," he continued, " to me as a husband for her sister. He is a younger man, a gayer gallant, than I am ;—but are ye sure that this high-bred soldier, this gentleman o' the court, will marry the lady Dorothy after that which hath fallen out ?"

" How, Sir !" whispered Sir Thomas Stanley with a fierce look ; " art thou

such a brute as to insult beauty and innocence in misfortune? To add the weight of thy heartless brutality to the sorrow which already oppresses her? Shame upon thee, Degge, — I ever held thee a fool — now I know thee for a beast.”

“ Beast ! fool ! brute ! ” exclaimed Sir Simon, screwing his lips together ; “ marry now, thanks to my philosophy, or I should run risk of being run through the body to avenge this insult — marry and amen — but what have I said, Sir Thomas Stanley, or what done to purchase these titles of honour that you have covered me withal ? ”

“ To instruct thee in manners, to induct thee into gentleness of behaviour,” said Sir Thomas, “ would be a more toilsome task than to teach the art of dancing to a Muscovy bear. But I charge thee, if thou dost count my displeasure for aught, address not thy discourse to the lady Dorothy.”

“ Wherefore should I not ? ” said the knight of Bowdon.

“ Because I will not have it so,” replied Sir Thomas ; “ that is sure a sufficient reason for thee ; but that thou mayst have no excuse for not obeying me, I tell thee thy conversation distresses her — she loathes thy jargon, and will be without it — mark me, will be, sir — If I hear thou dost intrude upon her, by my life I’ll cut off thy ears.”

“ By my life thou shalt not need,” replied Sir Simon, applying his hands to his ears. “ *Parvæ sunt hæ, sed parvæ istæ non contemnendæ.*”

He arose from his seat, and quitting the neighbourhood of the ladies and their protector, took his station beside Colonel Sparandam and the Jesuit, with whom, after some moments of hesitation, he entered into a desultory conversation.

“ The lady Dorothy is in marvellous trouble,” said he to the Jesuit, with a solemn shake of the head ; “ she seems *tristitia attonita* — you were present at the detection, I believe ?”

“ No, monsieur — no sir, I was not,” replied the Jesuit, who at a glance dis-

criminated the character of the knight ;
“ all was quiet when we arrived. Le voleur-ils s'en etoit allé.”

“ Monsieur le Comte,” said the knight, “ your name being du Prat, allow me to inquire, whether you are the son of that chancellor of France who joined the Queen Mother Louise in chousing the constable Bourbon of his property ?”

“ No, no, assuredly,” replied the Jesuit with a smile. “ The name of du Prat is not uncommon in France ; but my family has not the remotest consanguinity to that of the chancellor.”

“ Do you side with Guise, monsieur le Comte ?” said Sir Simon, “ or do you take part with Condé ?”

“ All persons that are of the true faith, monsieur,” returned the Jesuit, “ are on the party of the duke.”

“ I have my suspects, monsieur le Comte,” said Sir Simon with a significant look, that there are enemies of our royal queen lurking about this country —
“ I'faith, sir, I have one or two of them in my eye.”

“ Sir, monsieur !” replied the Jesuit with

a disorder he could not conceal, “ what do you mean? Whom do you suspect? What persons are they you do hold in your eye?”

“ They are spies,” returned Sir Simon, “ knaves that search about the country deluding the queen’s lieges with lies, and urging them into treasons — emissaries of Spain; and o’ my conscience, it is said of France too — but let that pass — I’ll watch the rascals closely — they shall feel the arm of the law.”

“ Der Teufel’s arm,” exclaimed Sparrandam, who had listened to the conversation of Degge and the Jesuit hitherto without joining in it, but whose attention was now particularly aroused, inasmuch as he concluded that himself and his colleague were meant by the insinuation of Sir Simon; a conjecture in which Monsieur le Comte shared with him. “ Perhaps, sir cavalier, your arm of the law will be neither long nor strong enough to take them.”

“ Marry, Monsieur le Comte and Monsieur le Colonel,” returned the knight, “ the laws of your countries may be

weak and imbecile enough; but it is to be told for the honour of society, that we in England manage better — the law is here held in respect — the sovereign may not slight it altogether.”

“ How doth it happen, then,” said the Jesuit, “ that your nobles do every day perform deeds that should not at least be tolerated, if justice was the rule of your country? Let us look no farther than our worthy host — he would last night have provided a feast for the ravens, by hanging yon outlaw upon the next tree, if fortune had not favoured his escape.”

“ True, right i’faith,” returned the knight with an arch wink; “ true, he would have hanged him up — and the deed would have been meritorious towards the state, as well as executory of his own vengeance. If the fact had been inquired of, the outlaw, or I clean mistake the matter, would have turned out a Spanish emissary, or a spy in the pay of the Spaniard at the least. The knight would have met reward instead of having incurred penalty — a barony, ’tis like, instead of the axe or halter.”

“Mein herz you are right,” cried Sparandam with a smirk, which shewed he was entirely relieved from his apprehensions. “The queen is happy in having subjects of such sagacity as Monsieur le Chevalier to protect her interest, and unmask her enemies.”

“But are you convinced?” said the Jesuit; “have you any proofs that this outlaw and his companions are friends of Spain?”

“Leave the proofs to me,” replied Sir Simon with a self-sufficient smile; “upon my shoulders lie the onus probandi every tittle. First, as to his appearance, which is no small matter, it is said this outlaw is commonly habited in a doublet and hose slashed and pointed after the Spanish fashion, with the Castilian mantilla, and the slouched beaver—what think ye of this?”

“Might he not, though an Englishman, have adopted this garb in the late reign,” said the Jesuit, amused with the reasoning of the knight, “when the Spanish fashion was introduced into this kingdom by king Philip and his followers?”

“ Yea, truly, he might, “ returned Sir Simon; “ but why retain it now when every thing Spanish doth give a nausea to Englishmen? Philip of Spain hath left these shores more than three years; he is become our enemy, if not in countenance yet in spirit; and it is better to have a declared foe than a false friend. No man, believe me, sirs, would wear a Spanish garb in England who was not the infatuated tool of the bigot Philip.”

“ But other than this what proof have you?” said the Jesuit; “ the man may not be rich enough to afford himself a new habit; and the one he wears may have been purchased in the last reign.”

“ Marry, Monsieur le Comte,” answered the knight, “ your question leads to another and important reason for suspicion. This outlaw does not at all times wear the dress I have described, though it is his usual habiliment — he hath been seen clad in Genoa velvet, double and treble piled — laid down with gold and silver embroidery — slashed out with tissues and satins, as richly and bravely as any lord of the land — and it is said,

moreover, that he hath as much money in his pockets as Sir George himself, and is as lavish and profuse as though his purse had no bottom."

"But a man may have fine clothes," said the Jesuit; "he may be rich, and he may wear as his common dress a Spanish habit, and yet, as I take it, be no friend to Spain."

"This is not all, Monsieur le Comte," continued Sir Simon with great earnestness; "I have yet but spoken of his exterior — of his figure and his means — now mark ye his 'haviour — mark his carriage, and if ye do not call it right Spanish, I will give ye leave to pink me through with a toledo. He not only makes love to every thing in petticoats, but comes here with his Castilian insolence, and serenades me the lady Dorothy by moonlight. Is there a cavalier of any other nation, Englishman, Frenchman, German, or else, that would lounge under a tree and tinkle a guitar, when he should be a-bed with all honest folk? answer me that, monsieur — is there one?"

"Yea, I trust many," replied the Je-

suit, who was fearful, if he was allowed to pride himself upon his judgment, that he would make his suspicions known publicly, and thereby introduce an investigation which might be fatal to their own safety; “were I as young as I have been, I would watch a fortnight, and play a thousand songs, to gain one glance from the bright eyes of either of these lovely maids. And so would you, Monsieur le Chevalier, when your political dream is off. Such metal is attractive, on my conscience.”

“Yea, and so it is,” answered the knight with some hesitation; “yet I should pause before I lost myself in the labyrinth of romance. But if this gallant were not a spy—an emissary—a plotter against the state—if he be really that which he seems, a youth of a noble strain, wherefore did he not come openly and make his love known to the Vernon? why does he affect concealment?”

“Why? wherefore?” said the Jesuit with a smile, “because concealment gives his amour an air of romance, which is a thousand times more delightful to the

bold youth in this age of departing chivalry, than the common and trodden ways of espousal."

"O' my faith, Monsieur le Comte," said the knight, "this is a manner of wooing I cannot understand. That a man should prefer danger to security, and for the sake of being out o' the common road put his life in jeopardy, as this gallant hath done, is a flight of conduct without analogy."

"Singularity," said the Jesuit, "hath little to do in the affair. The danger which confronts this bold suitor in his interviews with his mistress, the hazard which, during the time he hath lurked as an outlaw in the woods, hath constantly beset him, are the very wings which support him in this flight, as you call it, of romance. He thinks he shall have won his mistress by merit and by love, not by favour or the will alone of her father."

"Yea, Monsieur le Comte du Prat," replied the knight; "but Sir Thomas Stanley hath won the heart of the lady Margaret without any of this masking and serenading. I have reason to know

that he is well-beloved by her, full as well, by my sooth, as her sister could esteem the outlaw ; for she rejected a gentleman to favour Sir Thomas, who, without disparagement to his person or qualifications, was at least his equal, I will not say his superior."

" Meaning yourself, of course," said the Jesuit.

" I name no names," replied Sir Simon, " but the fact is so na'theless. I am but half convinced that yon outlaw and his friends, for friends he has, are not in the service of Spain ; and if they are so, it is time that their pranks should be looked after, lest they levy forces and rebellion in the country. But I will reveal my suspects to our host, and we will confer on the matter."

" Do, do," said the Jesuit ; " but lest your suspects should prove groundless be careful of telling them to others—the laugh would be against ye sorely."

" I'faith it would, Monsieur le Comte," answered the knight, who was peculiarly sensible to ridicule ; " I must be cautious."

Their conversation was now interrupted by Sir George, who, rising from table, told his guests he should leave them for a short time to follow their inclinations as regarded their amusements. "I leave Dorothy," he continued, "in thy hands, Margaret, and thou shalt be accountable to me both for her person and her carriage."

"Is she not safe with me?" said Father John, much hurt by this transfer of his pupil.

"No," replied Sir George bluntly, "else had she not been so familiar with the knave that hath escaped us."

"You do not doubt mine honour?" said the worthy priest, in a voice almost stifled with emotion.

"Thine honour! No," answered the knight somewhat softened; "but thou art growing old—thy wits are not sharp enough to measure the doubles of an artful jade, like Doll Vernon—thou mayst attend her, and see if thou canst preach penitence into her for her deceit; for by my life, unless she recants her folly, she hath lost her father for ever."

The fair sisters then left the parlour, accompanied by Sir Thomas Stanley, Father John, and the Knight of Bowdon, the latter of whom, notwithstanding the prohibition of Sir Thomas, was still in hopes of proving a thriving wooer to the Lady Dorothy.

“Now, Ned Stanley,” said Sir George Vernon, “thou mayst speak out; your friends are men of discretion.”

“Ay, discreet enough,” replied Stanley, smiling cynically; “but before thee, father, I know not whether I had best speak or be silent.”

“Wherefore before me?” said the Jesuit; “what is in me more than in Colonel Sparandam that should excite your distrust?”

“You will know, perhaps, too soon,” answered Stanley.

“Did ye not seek this fellow at Olle-renshaw’s?” said the knight. “I am told he commonly harboured there.”

“I sought him there,” replied Stanley; “instead of finding him, I found that witch of the night, the woodman’s wife, thy sister, holy father — if thou doest

recognize her, but the devil's kinswoman more likely than thine."

"Thou didst not lay hands on her?" said the Jesuit.

"Yea, by the rood," cried Stanley, "I mounted her and her pretty daughter behind two of my followers, and brought them to Chatsworth park, where Rose discovered to me the outlaw was concealed. The game, as I thought, was soon sprung—I pursued and brought him down with a shot from my petronel."

"But it was not the outlaw?" said Sir George eagerly.

"The outlaw!" repeated Stanley, "no; I had shot at a woodcock and kill'd a crow. The body rolled down the hill, and the face turned up that of the false fanatic Ashby, the witch's brother and thine, sir Jesuit."

The murderous ruffian gazed earnestly in the face of his colleague, to discover what impression his brother's slaughter made upon his mind. Sir George Vernon and Sparandam, with some touch of pity, surveyed the countenance of the

Jesuit, whose heart seemed too big for his breast, though he made no outward lamentation. He did not speak for a considerable time, during which, his companions preserved silence; the German and Sir George out of respect to his sorrow, and Stanley, to catch the key in which his feelings would be vented. At length, in a low and trembling tone, he said, "Pardon me, sirs—I pray ye pardon me—I am an old and a feeble man—I had thought that when I devoted myself to the church, I had cut away the ties of consanguinity—that thenceforth I should be without relatives or friends in the world—I find it is not so—the bands of kindred are still around me—death alone can loosen them;—but it is the will of Heaven that Philip should so fall—the deed is done—rest unto his soul."

"He died not with my will," said Stanley, satisfied that the Jesuit meditated no revenge; "had he not fled, but awaited my coming up, he would have been safe."

"Death tracks the coward," said Spa-

random ; “ if he fall not by lead or steel, he will die by hemp or water.”

“ I will not charge his blood upon you,” said the Jesuit to Stanley. “ I will accept his death as the deed of heaven ; he was my brother, my orphan brother, the petted plaything of my youth ; he was the image of our father, and thy pistol hath dashed out the life of this last creature of my blood—but I will not complain—it were idle to lament him—but he was a heretic, and thou didst slay him in his sins—thus destroying body and soul. Alas ! alas ! thou wert indeed inhuman.”

“ You reproach me wrongfully,” cried Stanley ; “ I meant not to slay your brother.”

“ Thou hadst no right to slay any man,” answered the Jesuit, with great indignation, “ neither my brother, nor any other — thou art a murderer ; for it seems by thine own word, thou didst not give him a chance of defence — thou didst not meet him in fair combat ; but killed him like an assassin. Oh ! if this be the honour of a soldier, what ruffian deserves the gibbet ?”

“Thou canst not judge of that thou didst not see,” said Stanley carelessly. “He would have escaped me, but for the pistol shot—if the man had proved him I sought, who but a whining priest could have charged me with dishonour? The outlaw is my mortal foe, besides the treacherous intruder upon my friend, and I would have slain him before the altar, if his blood had dashed over the rood.”

“You must pardon him, holy father,” said Sir George. “Ned Stanley plainly meant no harm to thy kinsman, though his evil fortune directed the shot to his heart. But how sped he afterwards? Did ye make further pursuit?”

“I would have done,” said Stanley, “I would have tracked the villain to his retreat; but your fellows were somewhat of the mind of the good father, and refused to follow me.”

“A mutiny!” cried Sparandam. “Didst thou not fall on?”

“No,” replied Stanley; “we have need of their service, so I kept the devil down, and referred their conduct to Sir George.”

“ A pest seize the villains,” exclaimed the knight of Haddon, “ and so the outlaw escaped through their pride and insolence. By my life, they shall dearly abye their rebellion. Did I not command that they should obey you as myself, and, if I had slain twenty men, would the knaves have fallen off from me? ~~Devils whip them.~~”

“ With my will this fault should be passed over,” said Stanley, “ at least until a more fit time for their correction. The hour is almost ripe for the commencement of our enterprize ; we may expect daily to hear that a Spanish armament hath somewhere landed to second our efforts, and we cannot afford to lose even this number of your followers, when every man is precious. Besides, they were bewitched by the oratory of the dame, and are wholly unused to the sight of blood and battle. In time they will learn better.”

“ Well, sirs, as you wish,” replied Sir George ; “ but in the meantime the outlaw will escape.”

“ He will not fly far,” said Stanley ; “ he will hover about Haddon, and we

must look out strictly —be that my duty —I will give you a good account of him.”

Fearful that if their conference were prolonged, it would excite suspicion, the party broke up, and Edward Stanley led the way into the gardens.

CHAP. V.

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow recalls not time that's gone;
Violets pluck'd, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again;
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully,
Fate's hidden ends eyes cannot see;
Joys, as winged dreams, fly fast,
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe,
Gentlest fair ! mourn, mourn, no moe.

QUEEN OF CORINTH.

SIR George and his friends had not taken many turns in the gardens before they were summoned into the hall to receive a company of new comers. These proved to be no other than Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, with her two eldest sons Henry and William, and a captain of the queen's guard, Sir William Saint Lo whom she afterwards married, and who at this time was among the number of suitors to the rich and handsome widow. The portrait of the renowned " Bess of Hardwick," we shall not here attempt to delineate further than to say, that, with

great beauty of face and figure, she possessed an overawing majesty, and almost austerity of countenance, a pomp of manner bordering upon arrogance, and a gait which rivalled that of her royal mistress in grandeur and stateliness. In fact, the characters of the two Elizabeths seem much to resemble each other. They were both handsome women, and expected a vast deal of deference to be paid to their charms. They were both lofty and impatient of opposition, but generous, firm and faithful in their affections. To the poor and humble they were gentle patronesses, never wearied in well-doing, persevering in their bounty unto the end, yet avoiding ostentation. The queen, of the two, was perhaps the shrewder woman; but Lady Cavendish was equally capable, though her mind might require a greater time for elaboration, and equally bold, undaunted, and inflexible. Many of our readers may, perhaps, have seen her portrait, at the Duke of Devonshire's seat at Hardwick in Derbyshire, which (though taken when she was much older than at the period of our story) still

exhibits those traits of character marked upon the countenance which we have attempted to describe. Her boys were very young, but seemed sufficiently acquainted with the despotic rule of their mother to obey without demurring to her authority. Sir William Saint Lo was the finished courtier, highly esteemed at court, as well for his suavity and elegance of manners, as for that love of science and polite literature, and that keenness of intellect which were so agreeable to the queen. He was a middle-aged man, and a widower, having at this time several daughters alive, and, in addition to his own handsome income, possessed the post of captain of the queen's guard, an office of much trust and considerable value. The face of Sir William, though what the world terms handsome, was not so remarkable for beauty as it was for the expression of keen parts, the edge of which was, however, softened down by an habitual urbanity, which seldom forsook his features. His figure was elegant, and though he did not in his dress display the gorgeous colours and em-

broidery which the gallants of Elizabeth's court commonly affected, his habit was cut after the prevailing fashion, and displayed a fine taste.

With the air of a Juno, Lady Cavendish swept into the parlour, where she was received by Sir George Vernon and his daughters, the latter of whom had long been held by her in great intimacy and affection, arising out of the cherished recollection which she held of their mother, who had been her bosom friend. With Sir Thomas Stanley and Sir Simon Degge she was acquainted, having frequently seen them at Haddon before; but Edward Stanley, Sparandam, and the Jesuit, whom she did not know, were severally introduced to her by Sir George.

“ I beg you, cousin,” said the knight of Haddon, after he had conducted Lady Cavendish to a chair, “ to honour these my friends with your regard — this is the Colonel Baron Sparandam — Colonel, this is my esteemed cousin and fair neighbour, Lady Cavendish of Chatsworth — Monsieur le Comte du Prat,

the young Edward Stanley, my valiant friend."

After returning the salutations of her new acquaintances with great formality, the countess replied: "Most here do know this gentleman," pointing to her companion; "but Mr. Stanley, and you that do not, I beg you to have in your remembrance Sir William Saint Lo, captain of the queen's guard."

The introductory salutations were again gone through, and afterwards Saint Lo said, "I have great pleasure in being known to soldiers so renowned as the Colonels Sparandam and Stanley — also to Monsieur du Prat."

"And we have equal honour," replied Stanley, eyeing the courtier with great attention, "in having acquired the knowledge of so finished a gentleman as Sir William Saint Lo."

"Think you the times are mended, cousin?" said Sir George, smiling at the alternate compliments of the cavaliers. "In my young days we were not used to be so courtly. These sugar-plum compliments are only fit for women."

“ I can see no reason, Sir George Vernon,” replied Lady Cavendish, “ why men should prefer sour churlishness to courtesy. If honesty be your apology, why may she not be clad as well in ermine as in rags?”

“ If honesty were beneath the cloak,” answered the knight, “ I would care not whether it were of velvet or buckram. But these holiday speeches have no hold upon the heart.”

“ You can only infer that from the character of your companion,” returned the lady. “ A man of honour will not say in compliment that which his conscience disclaims.”

“ With submission to your ladyship’s discrimination,” said the knight of Bowdon, “ I fear me our court gallants have little regard to the truth or falsity of these blanditia — these dulcissima verba ; they are matters of course well understood, and though, peradventure, they may not be of any great detriment, yet, with your ladyship’s leave, they are rather to be admired for their brilliancy than cherished for their value.”

“ Which, at the least, Sir Simon, is negative praise,” returned Lady Cavendish; “ and they have this other apology, that they are much to be likened to more laboured discourses; the conversation, indeed, of many grave oracles, which, notwithstanding they do rumble with a great deal of sound, seldom bear much of substantial import.”

“ Your ladyship hath reason,” replied the knight; “ the fact is so — I have often observed your man of importance weaving his web of ’tangled rhetoric, the which would be full of holes that the poor creature knew not of — and, forsooth, he would hold himself for the apostle of wisdom.”

“ True, when his neighbours were laughing at his shallow toppery,” said Sir Thomas Stanley; “ such characters are odd enough.”

“ Odd, such a character is the cata-technos of his own absurdity,” exclaimed Sir Simon; “ a solemn fool, a grave owl, a butt to shoot at.”

“ And yet it doth scarcely betoken a christian disposition of mind,” said the

chaplain mildly, "to turn even such a man into ridicule."

"My dear Sir John," exclaimed the knight of Bowdon, "it is impossible to turn such a man into ridicule — he is already a standing jest — a pillar of folly — a mountain of mirthful excitement — and besides, there must be such men in the world to draw out the salt of wit, to afford a subject for the seasoning of fancy and satire."

"There must — there must, Sir Simon," cried Sir Thomas Stanley mischievously, "else were there no need of wit, nor exercise for those powers of irony and sarcasm, which the intellectual spirits of all ages have particularly cultivated. Were there not such men, on my honour, Sir Simon, you would sparkle with less lustre."

The knight of Bowdon replied to this equivocal speech by a low bow, and said, "I'faith, Sir Thomas, you are either guilty of that crime we have been deprecating, or your friendship is too partial to my humble abilities. I have some

little skill in humane learning, but I am no Juvenal."

Sir George Vernon interrupted this discussion by changing the subject, very much to the mortification of Sir Simon Degge, who fancied himself an object of admiration to the whole company, and concluded that the envy of his host at beholding him the principal attraction in the room, had induced him to break in upon their conversation.

"I should have presented these brothers of the house of Stanley to you, cousin," said the knight of Haddon, "as my intended kinsmen; they become my sons within a fortnight."

"What! both?" said Lady Cavendish with marked surprise.

"Both," answered Sir George. "The marriage of Margaret with Sir Thomas Stanley has long been concluded."

"Yes, but Dorothy," said Lady Cavendish.

"In this matter obeys my wish," replied the knight, with a solemnity which seemed to be intended to put a stop to all further inquiries. But the spirit of

Lady Cavendish was not easily subdued, and she returned :—" I should prefer hearing you say that she followed her own inclination. Nay, cousin, look not moodily, I speak honestly, and in your own guise, without compliment or ceremony. I have known ye all too long, and too intimately, to con over my words nicely in the speaking."

" I would have you use your pleasure," replied Sir George; " but your voice, though a powerful one, would fail to alter my mind in this matter. If your ladyship will take a turn with me on the terrace, I will give you effectual reasons for my determination."

Lady Cavendish rose from her seat, and Sir George attended her out of the room, leaving Saint Lo in conversation with Edward Stanley, Sparandam, and the Jesuit. The two boys, Henry and William Cavendish, attracted by the caresses of Margaret Vernon, who was devotedly fond of children, leaned upon her lap, and engaged her with a recital of their sports and pleasures, whilst Sir Thomas Stanley endeavoured to keep up

the spirits of Dorothy by remarks upon the beauty and buoyant temper of their youthful guests. But this order was soon changed. Sir William Saint Lo shortly quitted his circle, and, sauntering round the room, first gazing at the portraits of the Vernon's ancestors which garnished the room, and then through the windows into the court and garden, he at length threw himself on a seat adjoining that whereon sat the Lady Dorothy, and joined in the conversation which she held with Sir Thomas Stanley.

“If you are not watchful, Stanley,” said Saint Lo, “you will lose your mistress. Harry has stolen half a score kisses already. He flies at every fair lady like a hawk at his quarry; there again, on my conscience I believe he’ll leave fair Margaret no lips.”

The boy now came bounding towards them, and seizing Sir Thomas by the arm, cried, “Sir Thomas Stanley you are to show me the pretty coucher you brought with you from Lancashire.”

“Indeed, sir,” replied Stanley, with a smile; “and who sent me this order?”

“A fair lady, sir,” answered the boy; “and if you do not obey, you shall be whipped out of your knighthood.”

“Gramercy,” cried Stanley, laughing, “I will be a good subject.”

He then led the boy out of the room, affording to Saint Lo the opportunity, which he seemed to have sought, of conversing with Dorothy alone.

The conspirators in the meantime were left to their own society; for Degge having entered into the discussion of some scholastic question with Father John, or rather having forced the controversy upon him, led the way into the hall as better fitted for disputation, and Margaret Vernon was still occupied in amusing the younger of the boys. Stanley and his companions, stationed in a recess at the lower end of the room, spoke in a tone so low as to be inaudible to the others.

“Is yon sycophant late from court?” said Sparandam.

“Ay,” replied Stanley, “were he not to fawn frequently upon the buxom queen, Saint Lo would soon lose his post,

He is a handsome fellow, and hath the trick of gaining a woman's favour. Elizabeth is fond of such men."

"But think ye that we are suspected?" said the German. "Comes he here to spy upon us?"

"No; fear nothing," replied Stanley. "He is now a wooer of the Lady Cavenish, and the most likely man to win her. His suit hath drawn him into Derbyshire, not suspicion of us. What an oily tongue the slave has! See yon girl, that hath her heart near broken, smiles at his flattery; the clouds are cleared away from her brow, and her eyes sparkle with pleasure. What in the devil's name can he say to her?"

"Say to her, man!" said the German, "that she eclipses the queen's circle; that no face in the drawing-room hath a hundredth part of her beauty; or he tells her, 'tis like, how incomparable she would look in some new kickshaw of the fashion. He unfolds to her the history of essences, puffs, powders, and pomatums, with an account of new tires, cut worked gowns, ermined mantles, and embroidered petticoats."

“ Of such frippery is your courtier’s discourse often composed,” said Stanley ; “ but Dorothy Vernon is not the woman to be amused with it.”

“ Never trust me, then,” replied the German ; “ your Queen Elizabeth herself, who hath a right masculine spirit, is as fond of gaudy apparel as any woman that hath an affection for nought beside.”

“ Ay ! but Elizabeth is not Dorothy Vernon,” answered Edward Stanley ; “ she may be as bluff as her father, but she has no heart ; whatever she does is from motives of policy ; all her desires centre in herself. Her dress is to give ornament to her person, to attract gazers, to inspire awe and admiration ; her learning, to captivate such fools as Degge ; her condescension and coquetry, to entrap butter-flies like Saint Lo. She has a hundred strings to her bow, — a hundred hooks to her line, and whoever moves within her range is sure to be inveigled. But Dorothy has no more art than that youngster.”

“ Then, how came she to deceive ye

all, and hold intercourse with this outlaw?" said Sparandam, "this was no innocent's management."

"Rather was it too much so," replied Stanley. "Had she not been open, guileless, and innocent, she had not exposed herself to this danger. Her sister, as wild as she looks, would have been more cautious. Margaret is as warm and voluptuous as Dorothy is frigid and temperate; yet has this Venus a shrewder judgment than this Diana."

"Why, Ned!" said the German, "thou seemest to prize the Lady Margaret before thine own bride."

"Would a man look upon crystal," said Stanley, "when a refulgent diamond glittered in his eye? Do we gaze after the departing moon that is dimmed by the rising of the sun? I would almost be content to forget the glory of arms to conquer that matchless woman."

"Heaven forbid!" cried the German; "thou art surely not covetous of thy brother's bride?"

"Brother!" ejaculated the libertine with a direful scowl; "in love as in war

I will have no brothers that thwart my career. Tom Stanley knows not the value of that jewel — no man but myself has essayed her worth, and it is passing great.”

“Then thou hast tried thy fortune with her?” said Sparandam.

Without replying, Stanley continued : “What, shall this fair-weather fop, that has never struck stroke in the field, carry off a prize rich enough for the conqueror of Europe? Shall this scented coxcomb be suffered to bask in the smile of this paragon, whilst I, his brother, do wear out my body in service, and gain no reward but the cheap shout of the vulgar? Plagues wither him ; dastard as he is—he is no brother of mine.”

“Curse him not, son,” said the Jesuit ; “he is, speak of him as thou wilt, the brother of thy blood, and even ignorant of thy desire. Curse him not for thine own sake — for a curse never rests — it will not cleave to the innocent, and may rebound upon thine own head.”

“So let it, and wither me ’stead of this bar to my love,” returned Stanley, “rather than I should see her his.

Heaven rain plagues and pestilence on me, gall me with the sores of a confirmed lazarus, strike me with a lingering palsy, rack me with bone-searching aches, till the very agony doth force the sweat from my brow—I will bear all sooner than see that fair body twined in the craven's arms. Death! How can I speak such words, or contemplate such a torment!"

He shook from head to foot with the intensity of his feelings, large drops of sweat poured down his forehead, and he gazed upon Margaret Vernon, who still fondled William Cavendish, with eyes of inordinate cupidity. At this moment the boy, who reclined upon the knee of his fair play-mate, turned his eyes towards Stanley, and struck with the gasping fierceness of his countenance, hid his head in the breast of Margaret Vernon, and said, "Lady Margaret! what hath befallen that gentleman? See, how wild he looks."

"Why think you so, my pretty boy?" said Stanley, changing his fierce glare into a look of affectionate mildness, and advancing to the seat of Margaret Vernon; "nay, look up, or we must have ye

whipped for bringing a soil on the name of Cavendish by fear."

"I do not fear you, sir," replied the boy, raising his head; "but I did not like your looks just then."

"I hope you like them better now," returned Stanley.

"Yes; but I have seen faces that I like better than any you can make," said the child.

"Indeed! my little fellow," cried Stanley, "and pray whose faces like you better than mine?"

"Truly, sir, I like Sir Thomas Stanley's," replied the boy, "and Sir William Saint Lo's, and Sir George Vernon's, and Father John's, and Sir Simon's.—Sir Simon looks silly, but he does not look fierce—and that old gentleman's face (pointing to the Jesuit) is much kinder than your's—that other gentleman (pointing to the German) is of your mark, and so I like him not—and then all the ladies have sweet faces, and I love them dearly."

"Then this brave gentleman's face and mine," said Stanley, pointing to Sparandam, "are the only two you dislike.

Perhaps the wars have marred our beauty, boy. A soldier's charms lie in his deeds, not in his visage, young sir."

"You wrong me, sir," cried William Cavendish; "I meant not that you were less handsome than the rest; for, save it be Sir Thomas Stanley, you are the finest gentleman that has been here since I came; but I feel I could love the others better than you. I do not," he continued, clasping the hand of Margaret Vernon tightly in his own, "I will not fear you; but if ever I should fear any body, sir, it would be you."

"How unhappy am I," said Stanley, looking earnestly at Margaret Vernon, upon whose chair he leaned, "to have fallen under the aversion of any thing so beautiful."

"Ah, sir," returned the boy with an arch smile, "I see you speak one thing and mean another."

Young "Devil's imp!" muttered Stanley, between his teeth, and then said aloud, "By my honour, my pretty lad, I mean as I say. Nothing can give me greater sorrow than to have displeased so fair a

being, and, heaven knows, the deed was involuntary — will you not forgive me, wretched that I am?"

"Nay, now you banter," said the boy.

"No, by my life," replied Stanley.

"By my life you do," cried the boy; "I know you are laughing and mischievous, for all your sour faces."

"I do not laugh, boy, I am wofully serious," returned Stanley. "Say ye do forgive me."

"But what is your offence?" said William Cavendish.

"Nay, boy, I know not," answered Stanley, still regarding Margaret Vernon, "except it be that I have not a handsome countenance."

"If that be all, sir," said the boy, "I marvel you crave pardon of me; for I did not make you. And if it be an offence to be ugly, and you are so indeed, you should rather ask pardon of the Lady Dorothy there, to whom you are about to be married; for she'll have the greatest share of your countenance."

"Right, my fine boy," said Stanley,

“ and you will come here and dance at my wedding, will you not ?”

“ Yes, faith, that I will,” said the boy, highly delighted ; “ for it will be your wedding too, sweet Lady Margaret.”

Margaret Vernon blushed deeply, and turned her eyes away, whilst Stanley gazed on her with a countenance agitated by contending passions. William Cavendish, who happened at the moment to fix his eyes upon the soldier, again shuddered with terror at his fixed eyes, distended nostrils, and gnashing teeth, and clasped his hands in a fright, exclaiming, “ Look, look, Lady Margaret ; he is wild again ?”

“ Ha !” muttered Stanley, in a hurried tone, but so low that what he said could only be heard by Margaret and the boy. “ I am wild indeed — mad as the March wind, or ungovernable fire — wild as the tornado, which no human force can check. Be sure I will not spare, if my desire be crossed, no, not even my own blood.”

His fulminations were, however, interrupted by the return of his brother and

Henry Cavendish, who came opportunely for the relief of Margaret Vernon ; and Edward Stanley no sooner perceived there was at present no further chance of working on the mind of the damsel than he drew off towards his confederates. Soon after, Lady Cavendish, accompanied by Sir George Vernon, entered the parlour ; and it seemed, from the moody aspect which either personage wore, that a warm contention, unsatisfactory to the lady of course, since the knight was not likely to change his intention, had passed between them. The lady's colour was heightened, her eyes sparkled more luminously, she breathed shorter, and her stride was more majestic and masculine than before she left the room, whilst, absorbed in her own thoughts, she did not deign for some minutes to cast a glance upon any one of the company. The symptoms were not quite so strong in the knight, but his manner bore evident marks of sullen and irreclaimable obstinacy, and he appeared somewhat indignant that he should have been pressed on a subject

wherein he alone, as he thought, could be an efficient judge.

After their return there was little conversation, except between Dorothy Vernon and Saint Lo, the former of whom, in a wonderful degree, seemed to have recovered her spirits. No more the pale and sorrow-clouded damsel, she shook off the benumbing apathy which had over-shadowed her, her eyes beamed with life, her colour freshened, and she appeared as if her blood had been thrown into circulation by active exercise. Edward Stanley was astonished, and sorely galled that the courtier should be able to effect such a change in an hour, when his own attentions and solicitations for a considerable period had entirely failed to move her. While he was yet pondering the effects of Saint Lo's eloquence, Lady Cavendish rose to take her leave, which she did with great formality.

"Though you quit Haddon unsatisfied, cousin," said Sir George, whose temper had now somewhat returned, "I trust you will not fail us at the wedding."

"I shall visit Dorothy many times

before the day of her marriage," replied Lady Cavendish ; " she will need support and advice under so trying circumstances. I shall see her almost daily ; and I intreat you, Sir George, to suffer that she visit me."

" If she visit your ladyship," said Edward Stanley with a smile, " I fear I shall lose my bride."

" Wherefore, sir?" replied Lady Cavendish, seriously.

" Sir William has held her in conversation," continued the soldier, " for this last hour, and I wot not what he can talk of so long, and with so much interest, unless it be love."

" Fear not, sir," returned the lady, with a tone which proclaimed she would not understand his raillery ; " Sir William Saint Lo hath too many years upon his back to attempt Dorothy Vernon."

" Yet is he not so much on the wane," continued Stanley, with a taunting sneer, which made the blood rush to Saint Lo's face, " but he has still the germs of passion in him. Sir William is a courtier, a finished man, an exquisite gentleman,

well esteemed of the ladies — he hath admirable parts, parts admirably disposed, you understand me and them, fair widow, or the world lies.”

“ Mr. Stanley,” said Saint Lo, looking him in the face with great fierceness ; but before he could proceed further, Lady Cavendish took him by the arm, smiled contemptuously upon Stanley, made her obeisance, and departed.

CHAP. VI.

Father, you are an aged man,
Your head is white, your beard is grey,
It were a shame, at these your years,
For you to rise in such a fray.

THE RISING IN THE NORTH

THE gate of Haddon was scarcely closed upon Lady Cavendish and her train, when two horsemen demanded admission. These were the charge d'affaires, Dr. Probus, and the servant appointed by Sir George to attend him, covered with the dust, and panting with the fatigue of travel. To do Probus justice, it must be confessed, that he was not, like Sir Simon Degge, a sluggish traveller; but rather to be classed among that order of equestrians who deem it a proof of excellent horsemanship ever to keep their beasts upon the gallop, to ride up hill with the same speed that they ride down, or upon level ground; and to astonish the natives by the noise and clatter of

~~their~~ march. And hence it now was that the horses of the ambassador and his follower were quite blown, sickened, and gasping for very weariness, whilst the servant heartily cursed the doctor for his mercurial ambition. But Probus having attained the end of his journey, did not busy himself with any further regard of his nag, which he left in the hands of his attendant, and proceeded to the hall, where he found his patron and the rest of the company as they had been left by Lady Cavendish. He approached Sir George with a great display of courtesy, making a number of low bows, and creaming up his countenance with smiles and simpers.

“Ha, Probus,” cried Sir George, “returned so soon — thou hast not abused thy furlough. Well, sir, and how are your friends in London?”

“In marvellous health, your worship,” replied the doctor, “very good health, if it like ye. They desire humbly to present their duties to your worship, and thanks for the entertainment your poor servant hath received under this hospitable roof.”

“ And how go they on at court, Doctor Probus ?” said Sir Simon Degge ; “ how fares her renowned majesty ? Doth she still exalt herself ‘ more deæ, orbem digito temperantis,’ as the poet saith ? or doth she wax feeble under the comminations of her enemies ?”

“ Marry, sir,” replied the doctor in the same strain, “ the queen has the aspect of a lion, and seems worthy to reign, sanguine multo. Her countenance would daunt the devil, with pardon be it spoken, and much more her human adversaries.”

“ Ha !” cried the knight of Bowdon, extending his arm in a theatrical style, “ she hath her dad’s humour to the life — touching her friends, as saith my grave Tacitus, ‘ apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia, impromptu adversus omnes alios hostile odium.’ She is all gentleness and affability to such sleek-faced gentlemen as Sir William Saint Lo that hath just left us ; but to those that cross her, like the north wind.”

“ And what news is stirring ?” said Edward Stanley.

“None, save that the Poles and Sir Anthony Fortescue have been sent to the Tower,” replied Probus.

“Ha, wherefore?” said Sir George.

“On suspicion of treason,” answered the doctor; “the queen hath detected an intercourse between them and France.”

“How, how, what say you to this, Monsieur le Comte du Prat?” said Sir Simon Degge.

“It may be so,” answered the Jesuit calmly; “but these gentlemen might have an intercourse with France, as I have with England, very innocently — let us hear of the proof, monsieur, before we fix treason upon the prisoners.”

“I will not hesitate to declare my mind,” said Edward Stanley; “if the queen goes upon suspicion only, she has played the tyrant in this business. The Poles and Fortescue have been loyal till now, and by my faith are only caged because they will not follow the court religion.”

“You judge lightly, Ned Stanley,” said his brother; “the queen has always been careful to preserve her subjects

their liberty. If reasonable presumption lie against Fortescue and his kinsmen, of right they should make answer to it."

"Good son," said Sir George Vernon, "do not abet with thy honourable countenance the rigour, to call it no less, of this fearful and petticoat government. As well might Elizabeth and her council lay charge against me, and drag me forth of Haddon, as against Fortescue and the Poles, who have no power in the realm to do good or harm. By Saint Mary, this tyranny is enough to spur many a good man to give them reason for their suspicions."

"It is time that England shook off this villanous yoke," cried Edward Stanley; "she has been goaded deep enough."

"Ned Stanley," said his brother, "I charge you be at peace — if you will not, abide the danger yourself and speak abroad — by my life, you shall not here."

"Who talks of a foreign danger within my hall?" said Sir George; "the Vernon hath not lost his power."

There was a pause of silence which

continued some moments. The knight of Haddon stood somewhat in front of colonel Sparandam, the Jesuit, and Edward Stanley, who watched, with penetrating glances, the effect which their colleague's few but awakening words had produced upon the rest of the company. Sir Thomas Stanley, whose fine countenance was seldom overcast, finding he could offer no effective opposition to the sentiments of Sir George and his brother, and thinking it would be more prudent to give up than continue the discussion of so dangerous a subject, threw his hat upon his head, and walked out of the hall; whilst Sir Simon Degge, whose simplicity was shrewd enough to perceive that he might take some harm by being implicated in a treasonable conversation if it were blown abroad, retired slowly behind his companions, and at length made his exit after Sir Thomas. The other persons present, the knight's daughters, and Father John, looked upon the animated face of Sir George with heartfelt concern, whilst he, stung with the unceremonious departure of his son-in-law,

cried "By my life, Sir Thomas Stanley, thinks I doat betimes—he uses but small ceremony, methinks."

"Pardon him, dear father" cried Margaret Vernon; "it is his care for your safety that has made him oppose your sentiments."

"His care hath little courtesy," replied the knight; "my safety never leaned on another's shoulder. The Vernon needs no help—and why should he care for me? I have not yet said I will hold up my hand against Elizabeth. I have not yet declared that I will brook no sovereign that is not of the faith of our fathers—I have not."

"Do not, do not, I conjure you," exclaimed Margaret, clasping the hand of her father in both of her's. "Oh! do not peril your dear life, your honourable name, upon a venture that hath no good object—that can have no worthy end to you. Do not, at the word of others—" she continued, casting a fiery glance upon the conspirators—"do not, at the invocation of their ambition, risk what they have no interest in, your precious

life. Let those who have nought to lose—let those who have no ties, dear and affectionate as you have, seek their advantage in changes and rebellion; but in the name of heaven, hide not your grey hairs in the armour of treason—crush not your aged bones beneath the steel of disloyalty. Oh! harder and more obdurate than steel must those men be, who could incite an aged father to such a deed of desperation.”

“Pry’thee, be silent,” said Sir George, affected almost to tears by the words of his daughter,

“I cannot, I cannot be silent!” continued Margaret. “Shall I see my blind father walk over a pitfall, and not warn him of his danger? Shall I see him approach a precipice, and not tell him of his peril? No, heaven be praised—I am not so disloyal. Proud am I of the renown of my fathers, I would not have it sullied; but your life is even still dearer than family honour. Let those who are likely to enjoy the world longer than you are, grapple for its enjoyments;

they seek not their country's weal — they rise for their own ambition."

"Thou doest make good use of thy woman's privilege," said Sir George, endeavouring to calm the mind of his daughter. "Thou doest assume my disloyalty, of which nothing does appear."

"Ha, would to heaven," said Margaret, "that I had no fears. But how comes it, if you are loyal, that Mr. Stanley durst speak his treason aloud? Who are these gentlemen that you greet as old friends, when until now their names have never reached our ears? And on what mission has master Probus been sent, who, before, has never been absent a day from Haddon, since he first entered these walls?"

"Does it become you, girl, to question your father thus?" said Sir George, assuming as much severity as possible. "Am I to answer every question that your impertinence may suggest? Am I responsible for the words of Ned Stanley? Is it not possible that I should be acquainted with persons that you do not know? Let Probus answer for himself."

If he has not been absent from Haddon since he came hither, the better did he deserve leave of absence for the short time he has been away."

"What I have said," cried Edward Stanley, "though I repeat it not here in the presence of fair ladies, I will proclaim with beat of drum throughout the kingdom ere the month be old."

"My fair young lady," said the Jesuit, approaching her with an air of kind regard, "much doth it grieve my heart to see you so moved — though you have not seen my person before, nor heard my name, do not suspect that I am a stranger to your father, or these hospitable towers. Ah! before your birth, when your dear sainted mother was the image of yourself, and when your father was one of the most gallant knights of King Harry's court, often have I wandered through Haddon park — often have I tasted the good cheer of this hall, and partaken of its festivities. Though you have not heard the name of Du Prat, you have heard of Sandrart, a worthy religious of my country, and your mother's chaplain."

“ I knew him well,” said Father John ;
“ he was a good Christian.”

“ Had he been living,” continued the Jesuit, “ his testimony would have dispelled your suspicion ; he was my fast friend, and from him I learned much that I know of religion — he, too, dispensed your mother’s alms — never knew I a more bountiful lady — never a more faithful almoner. Pardon me, Sir George, if I say that your lady’s unbounded charity, as much as your own princely hospitality, has served to earn you your titular name, the King of the Peak.”

“ I pray ye, sir, no more of this,” said Sir George, turning away and wiping his eyes, while his daughters and Father John were dissolved in tears, at the mention of those remembrances which the Jesuit had of his youth.

“ I have wronged you, worthy sir,” said Margaret Vernon, when she could speak ; “ I crave your indulgence — nay, as you knew our blessed mother, I conjure you, for her sake, to assist me in breaking this ill-advised conspiracy. Think, if you regarded her, that she now

speaks to you, and intreats you to display the evils of rebellion in their true light to her widowed husband. Be not fearful of rebuke — it is the part of a true friend to despise all things for his friend's advantage; and here, where your counsel may prevent the ruin of a noble house, be not, I beseech you, sparing of intreaty."

"Girl, girl, you distract me," cried the knight of Haddon, pacing the hall with furious steps; "as yet, I swear to you, I have done nothing."

"Nay then, you have purposed to do something," replied Margaret.

"I have," cried the knight, stopping in the midst of his march, "I have purposed to levy war against Elizabeth, to hurl her from the throne, and to place him upon it that hath better right to the crown."

"You have purposed this!" exclaimed the bold girl; "you! and with what means? by what aid? with what strength? where are your soldiers, your arms, your munition of war? what men of conduct and experience have you to cope with the Lords Sussex, Rutland, Shrewsbury,

and the other captains of note that are steadfast to the queen?" She paused a moment for a reply, but no one spoke. Edward Stanley smiled with an air of compassionate contempt, probably deeming the subject of arms above a woman's capacity. But Margaret did not notice him. "It has been a boast, I know," she continued, "that the Vernon can raise a power of ten thousand men; but if it be so, still they must be raw, heartless, and undisciplined — how unfit to cope with the tried soldiers of the royal army I will not mention to you that are used to arms. And before you could strike a stroke — yes, before you could advance your banner a day's journey, the lieutenant of Nottingham, Earl Rutland, would be upon ye with his veterans. Oh, be not mad. Woman as I am, and poorly skilled in martial enterprizes, I can see that your designs are as impotent as they are evil and dangerous."

"Why, bless thee, Meg," cried her father, affecting a laugh, "thou hast learnt to rail handsomely whilst thou hast been away; is it the mode at Lathom,

Ned Stanley, or where else has she been at school? I'faith, if thou doest lecture thy husband, when thou gettest him, often after this fashion, he'll soon wish himself deaf."

"Trifle not, I beseech ye, with your danger," replied Margaret.

"Fair Margaret," said Edward Stanley, "a soldier should ever look danger coolly in the face—he that flies from that he does not see, may chance to get laughed at for being scared by a bug-bear."

"Mr. Stanley, I leave you to beware your own fortune," returned the damsel seriously; "how far your life may be valuable to your friends, I know not."

"And thou art one of his friends, art thou not?" said her father.

"I profess not to be his enemy," replied Margaret, "though he would prove himself the foe of our house, by betraying you into causeless peril."

"How knowest thou that I am led by him?" said Sir George. "Wherefore thinkest thou I have no will of my own?"

"Is it not known," returned Margaret,

“ that he is a restless and dangerous man? Has he not the name of a wild and desperate soldier? fonder of war, and the turmoil of battles, than careful to observe that his object is right.”

“ My object has ever been glory, fair Margaret, for which all handsome women and valiant men do earnestly pant,” returned Stanley. “ Admiration is a prize which all set for; and which some, like myself, will win, though our laurels be somewhat smirched for’t. But though I be the restless soldier — the dangerous man thy gentle heart would make me, — yet would it be indecorous to infer from thence that the knight has lost his wits. He is still, for aught I see, as capable of exercising his judgment, as when he was as young and as restless as myself.”

“ But if your plot be worthy, your means capable, and your end sure,” said Margaret Vernon, “ if there be neither danger nor dishonour in your enterprize, wherefore does not Earl Derby appear in your company? Why does Sir Thomas Stanley shun your association?”

“ Why, fair Margaret?” returned

Stanley, smiling, “because Earl Derby has been always held a peaceable man—a man that would rather undergo an abatement of his right than be at the trouble of revenge. Your philosophers call this magnanimity—but far away from me be such spiritless honour—such cold-blooded generosity. If any man withholds that which is mine, he holds me cheap—he treats me with contempt—his opinion is my dishonour, till it be wiped away, and my right recovered. As for Tom Stanley, the gentle youth prefers the blandishments of love to the trophies of the field.”

“If the glory of arms be your only desire,” said Margaret, “why may you not seek it abroad? If nothing can satisfy your ambition but the slaughter of your kind, gorge not your appetite with the blood of your countrymen, but dip your plumes in that of men foreign in clime and language. Think ye the way to win fame is to introduce war into the bowels of your country? yes, such fame as that of the Roman dictators, that have been remembered with curses until

this hour. Such fame as Count Julian won when he whitened his country with Moorish turbans. How like ye to mate with these? Talk you of Earl Derby? Wherever the Christian faith is known, the unspotted name of your father is heard with reverence and admiration. His hospitality, his public virtue, his steady loyalty, his humanity and beneficence, have gained for him, with poor and rich, with simple and gentle, with king and beggar, a report that cannot be surpassed—a fame that is neither sullied by the tears of the widow, nor the wailings of the orphan. By his counsel, then, I intreat you, be guided. If he says your designs are just and profitable to your country, if he lends you his countenance, I will no more intreat ye to hold back.”

“ This is a matter of too much import,” said Stanley, with great insolence, “ to be put to the arbitrament of grey-beards or women. The blow must be struck now or never. The lapse of a week without stirring may bring us to the rack or gibbet.”

“Consider well, Mr. Stanley,” said Margaret, “that you may not deserve both.”

“Fie on ye, Meg Vernon,” cried her father, “hast thou not yet learnt to treat my guests with courtesy?”

“When so much is at hazard, dear father,” returned the damsel, “truth is much before courtesy. If, as my poor judgment tells me, Mr. Stanley meditates a rebellion, which is authorized by no right, he deserves doom — the pain he has himself expressed. Is it a light thing, I pray ye, to kindle the fires of civil war?”

“It is just to put down an usurper,” answered Stanley.

“But has the nation constituted you judge of the right?” returned Margaret Vernon. “Has she appointed you her attorney to enforce her claims? If so, one would have thought she would have provided you with the means. She does not surely expect you, like a knight of romance, to cope single-handed with the armies of the queen. Valiant as you may esteem yourself, Mr. Stanley, I much

doubt whether you could brandish the lance of Sir Palmerin."

"Had I a kind mistress half so fair as the Lady Margaret," replied Stanley, smiling, "I could do more wonders by half than ever Palmerin did. Orlando, were he living, should have continued mad, in despair of equalling my valour, and poor Sir Guy turned again to Palestine that he might avoid being the foil of my renown."

"Himmelsdonner!" exclaimed Sparandam, "I would like to see any of your knights of romance for the first time in as hot a caliver fire as I have seen this young dare the devil. His lance would serve him in little stead."

"I thought you had been a stranger to Mr. Stanley," cried Margaret Vernon, eagerly catching at the incautious confession of the German.

"Stranger!" repeated Sparandam, instantly conscious of his error, "nein — that is — he is —"

"Your friend, perhaps, your accomplice in this rebellion," continued Margaret bluntly.

"Nein, nein — not so," cried Spa-

randam, with great hesitation ; “ the lad served under me in the French war, when Savoy commanded. I knew him then, and saw him do better service than any man in the army. I have since been in garrison, and the fiend knows where he has been.”

“ Then you, sir, were not among those unfortunate men that were shipwrecked in a Spanish vessel on the flats near Liverpoole ?” said Margaret.

“ U--umph ! — U--um--ph !” said the German, not able to conjure up any lie to meet so direct a question.

But he was soon released from his dilemma by Sir George, who said “ I charge you, girl, to insult my guests no more by your impertinent questions. They are under my roof, and remember that hospitality shields them from importunity.”

“ And whilst they preserve the character of friendly guests,” said Margaret Vernon, “ be assured, dear father, they shall meet with nought less than respect from me. They will deserve no other countenance than that of esteem, but some of them have already forfeited that character; have

sunk it in that of allies and confederates — of incendiaries and sowers of treason. To these do not expect that I will shew friendly countenance ; rather will I stand upon my guard against their mischievous and selfish designs.”

“ Well, fair lady,” said Stanley with a smile, “ since you are resolved to put your wit to so bad a use as the investigation of this political conspiracy, for friendship’s sake let us know the men you distrust. It seems I am one.”

“ Indeed, sir, you are,” cried Margaret ; “ and since you persist in this plot, which, on my honour, has no other end than your own advancement by the ruin of others, I tell you, sir cavalier, to look well to your steps ; you may chance to get a fall.”

The proud soldier again smiled at the prediction of Margaret Vernon, and Sir George laughed heartily at the serious and almost threatening aspect of his daughter ; but the Jesuit, whose alarm was much more easily excited than that of his companions, fancied he perceived somewhat more in the warning of the

damsel than the idle denunciations of an angry woman. Colonel Sparandam too, whose confidence had received a check from the cross-questioning of Lady Margaret, beheld her with an eye of dread and suspicion. The manner in which she had become acquainted with his knowledge of the Spanish Captain Pacheco, which was entirely a mystery to him, (though the fact is that Sir Thomas Stanley had confided to her the whole story of their adventures at Liverpool on their first arrival, as he had heard it from his father), made him fear that their secret was known to many, and induced an uneasy kind of suspicion that their plot and their lives were both insecure; and his mind was by no means quieted when the Lady Margaret, with added gravity, addressed herself to Edward Stanley.

“It is scarce a time for merriment, Mr. Stanley, and less so for you than most. I bid you beware before this company. I do it soberly, sir, and I would have you take note of my words, for they mean much. I will not stand by, and

see the ruin of my house. Sooner than that, I will lay aside reserve, and do somewhat that will palsy your heart, bold as it is."

The smile of contempt, which had long governed the features of Stanley, instantly fled, his colour went and came, and he gazed upon Margaret Vernon as if he intended to dart from his eyes into her bosom that reply which his mouth durst not utter.

"What, Ned Stanley!" cried Sir George, "has this silly wench dumb-founded thee? Tut, man, what need hast thou to care for her somewhats? Thou art to marry Dol, not this petticoated spit-fire."

"The Lady Margaret hath taken offence where none was meant," answered Stanley, recovering his confidence. "But, fair Margaret, be not angry with your servant. I would not defy those brilliant eyes to mount the throne of England. Say but we are friends, and this plot — this woful rebellion, if thou dost deem it so, shall not be moved, until I can persuade you to join our party."

“ You may banter, sir,” said Margaret.

“ I banter not, by my soul,” replied Stanley.

“ I will watch you, sir,” returned the damsel, and taking her sister by the hand, quitted the hall.

CHAP. VII.

A blue-coated serving man, a chronicle o' the elder time, a maudlin beer-barrel fellow, that for his antique saws, and grizzled hairs, is kept o' the muster, — but yet as honest as old time itself.

THE QUEEN'S COURTIER.

THE remainder of the day was occupied by Sir George Vernon in dispatching couriers to Earl Derby, and others of his friends and kinsmen, to invite them to the wedding of his daughters. Edward Stanley also wrote to his father, to desire his consent, according to form, to his marriage with the Lady Dorothy, which he had no fear of being refused, for, if Earl Derby could have been influenced by worldly considerations, in addition to her birth, beauty and accomplishments, she was one of the richest heiresses in England. And in full confidence of his father's approbation, Edward Stanley had fixed his marriage to be solemnized on the same day as that

of Margaret Vernon with his brother ; an arrangement which was favoured by the impetuous disposition of the knight of Haddon. At the same time, orders were sent to Furnivale, the London tailor, for a whole wardrobe of fine clothes for each of the brothers ; whilst a host of mercers, embroiderers, and all occupations,

“ That serve to rig the body out with bravery,”

were put into requisition for the ladies bridal clothes. But it would be impertinent in us to waste the time of our readers in the detail of matters of course ; we shall therefore proceed with the thread of our history.

The shades of a dark and stormy evening had begun to fall upon the close of this eventful day, when a man appeared at the gate, and requested to see one of the strangers who had arrived the preceding night at Haddon. Which of the strangers by name he either could not or would not tell, and carefully concealed his person from the sight of the porter, who in vain held his lamp to the man's

face, which he shrouded beneath a large shepherd's cloak.

"Come in, come in, good fellow," said the porter extending the gate. "Though there's but small hope o' either o' their honours coming down to such a blind message. Come in, lad."

"Nay," muttered the stranger, "I shall do well enow here."

"Do there!" exclaimed the grey-headed janitor. "What would ye stand there for, when the wind's gotten up o' this fashion? Marry, good fellow, thy blood's younger and warmer than mine, or ye'd be fain o' getting under shelter when the dew's dreeping."

"The night's a right farrantly night," growled the man; "the wind 'll serve to keep rain off. But my foot's for speed, old fellow; will ye do my errand?"

"Yea, lad," answered the porter; "but ye'll scarce be for hoping that the colonel or his worship the count—"

"That's him I mean, the count I want, not the soldier," cried the fellow abruptly.

“Marry, friend, and I’ve heard your tongue afore to-day,” said the porter.

“Like enough,” muttered the man; “but be speedy — an’ thou wilt haste to see the count, I will give thee a groat for thy pains.”

“Gramercy, good fellow,” replied the janitor, “I’ll have none of thy groat. I’ll do thy errand without fee. The road into the Vernon’s hall is not to be bought with money. But once more I tell thee, the count is not like to come, much less to trust himself out of the gate with such a tall fellow as thee that dare not unbusk his face.”

“I only follow the fashion of my betters,” replied the man. “If thou and I were on Cawton Edge, I durst shew thee my face, and it is not for fear now, nor shame, that I hide it; but I know thy woman’s tongue, gaffer, would bruit me over the house, and my business at present is secret.”

“A plague on thy incivility!” exclaimed the ancient Cerberus. “My woman’s tongue, quotha! a plague on thy tongue and thy secrets both — my wo-

man's tongue, indeed. Let me tell thee, fellow, I have been noted as a safe and discreet man for sixty good years; yea and have been trusted with secrets afore now, and secrets of import, sirrah, great and worthy secrets, pertaining to great and worthy men withal, — my woman's tongue indeed! Marry and I wot thou art some sorry churl, fitter to stand on Cawton Edge than nigh the gate of a gentle knight."

"Wilt thou bear my message to the count?" said the man.

"I'faith I would not be surety that thou art not some deer-stalker, akin, 'tis like, to those archknaves Onshaws o'the woodhead," said the porter; "Anak's not such a swaggering rogue as thou art, or thou art his very marrow for length o' limb."

"Good night, gaffer," cried the man, wrapping his clock close round his body. "I will report abroad that times are changed at Haddon. Time has been that a poor man's message would not ha' stuck at the gate, sooner would the porter's head ha' stuck o'er it; but Haddon's

now got like other places, ye must wait on the servants afore ye can say aught to the lord."

"Nay, nay, good fellow," cried the old man in great affright, "I did not refuse to do your bidding; come within side the gate, and I will go up to the hall. Come, lad."

"No," answered the man sternly; "for a deer-stalker the wind from the hill is warm enow, let him clap his hands, and walk before the Vernon's gate to keep his blood from chilling."

"Nay, not so," said the porter with a tone of intreaty.

"Young as I am," continued the stranger, "I have seen the time when no man stopped at this gate but he was furnished with fire, and food, and brisk bonny ale. Who then durst have questioned the comer, and blackened him with foul names? By my life, his lord would have pitched the knave from the high tower."

"I tell thee, good fellow," cried the porter, "thou didst mistake me. I blackened thee not. I would have had thee to come within the gate, and I would

have regaled thee as well as man ever was regaled within these ancient walls; what talkest thou of the old hospitality of Haddon! Thinks't thou I know it not—I that have been tenant of the lodge for sixty years. Go to, boy. I know it well; and I will tell thee more, good fellow — that neither at any time, nor by any lord heretofore, was hospitality more used than it is now, and by our good lord Sir George."

"Sir George is a noble knight," said the stranger. "You would do well better to note his carriage."

"Well, but do thou enter," said the porter, "come into my lodge, and I will send my deputy with thy message to the count, whilst thou shalt taste some of the best ale in England; come lad, thou shalt have no reason to think worse of Haddon than formerly."

Softened by the intreaties of the janitor, the man, muffling himself to the eyes with his cloak and hood, set his foot within-side the gate, which the porter carefully locked; he then called his deputy out of the little lodge or cell which

they usually occupied, and sent him to the hall to request the count du Prat would suffer a stranger to speak to him for a few moments. He next conducted his companion into the lodge, and having desired him to be seated upon a truckle bed which formed the double convenience of a couch and settle, he lifted up the valance and produced from beneath a large flaggon of strong ale, which he assured the stranger his deputy had but just received for his supper allowance.

“ But taste it, good fellow, taste it,” said the elder, “ and if thou doest not say ’tis as good double ale as ever crab hissed in, I will say thou art no judge o’ the matter. Drink, man, — be not over nice — drink heartily from the flaggon — it saves the time of splashing it out into the cup.”

The stranger did not appear to require much invitation ; he seized upon the vessel, and turning away his head that the porter might not catch any glimpse of his features while he drank, took a deep and lengthened draught of the nut-brown liquor.

“ Marry, well done, lad,” cried the porter, “ this is not the first time thou hast helped to drain a flaggon—well, and how is’t? Fresh—is’t not? Ha, ha, there is no better brewed than from Wye water—give it me, boy, give it me—it hath been lining to my cloak anenst many a cold blast—here’s to thee, heart.”

“ They say you may know a man by his liquor,” said the stranger; “ and if’t be true, your lord has a bold and an open spirit, gaffer, for there’s been nought dealt out for this ale with a near hand.”

“ ’Tis pretty ale,” replied the porter with a cold and careless air, which he assumed to do the more honour to his lord’s liberality; “ but, bless ye, in the cellars of Haddon there’s such ale as has never yet seen light, and may perhaps never be drunk again when it’s done.

“ Old ale, I warrant,” said the stranger.

“ Old—why no,” returned the porter, “ none so old—it is but the age of the Lady Dorothy Vernon, who is still but a chicken—there was moreover another brew at the birth of the Lady Margaret—but potent stuff, boy, powerful liquor—

your wines and strong waters may stand by when it comes upon table—they would not be looked at.”

“ I would fain taste such ale as that,” said the stranger.

“ So thou shouldst, friend, but it’s not yet tapped,” returned the ancient bibber. “ Nevertheless I’ll tell thee how thou mayst taste it, if thou hast patience.”

“ I cannot say I’m o’erstocked with that article,” said the man.

“ Tut, man, thou wilt not have to wait more than a fortnight,” said the porter.

“ A fortnight’s fourteen days,” replied his companion ; “ I know not where thou and I may be before it run out.”

“ Tush, man, never fear,” returned the old man. “ I shall be either where I am now, or in Bakewell church-yard. But thou, if one may judge from thy figure, and thy hearty stomach, hast a life to live — well, if thou art living, and in the Peak until the fortnight be out, thou mayst indulge thy taste with a flaggon of this famous ale.”

“ How, prithee ?” said the stranger.

“Nay, I was about to tell thee,” answered the porter. “I perceive, indeed, that thou hast no reason to boast thy patience. But, mark me — the wedding-day is fixed for the double marriage of Sir Thomas Stanley to the Lady Margaret Vernon, and of his brother, the great soldier, master Edward Stanley, to the Lady Dorothy.”

“The devil!” exclaimed the man.

“The devil!” repeated the elder. “What ails thee, friend? Who mentioned the devil? I said Margaret Vernon would marry Sir Thomas Stanley; and Lady Dorothy his brother.”

“Did ye so? I was thinking of another person,” replied the man.

“By my troth, friend,” said the porter, “the devil’s a subject not to be trifled with — the sooner thou doest quit thy thoughts of him the better.”

“Right, gaffer,” returned his companion. “But are the se weddings so soon? Within this fortnight, say ye?”

“Yea, some day within the next fortnight,” said the porter, “and fine doings there will be, lad — all the friends and

kinsmen of the Vernon will be invited — the house will be open to all comers — nothing but feasting and drinking, piping and fiddling and dancing — all manner of disports, both for in doors and out — there shall we have hawking and hunting in the day — and revels and masques at night — 'twill be such a sight, lad, as hath never been seen in this country since the days of king Peverel."

"The Vernon's a gallant man," said the stranger.

"And if thou wilt come," continued the janitor, "we will make thee heartily welcome, and thou shalt taste the strong ale — odsheart, man, it were worth travelling a day's journey to smell it — it will scent like an orchard in blossom. And then thou wilt see the guests in their display. The silks and velvets, and embroidery garnish — the gold and silver work — and I know not what else — all that can please the eye, and gladden the heart, lad, shalt thou behold. I pledge thee my honest word."

"I'd rather see a pack of dogs with the chase in view," cried the stranger, "than all the motley gentry of England."

Give me a stand on Cawton wi' a tough bow drawn to my shaft head, and a herd o' deer before me, and thou mayst watch the anticks of the revellers 'till thou art weary."

"Nay, thou wilt see hunting enow, and shooting enow," replied the porter; "there will be somewhat to hit the pleasure of every man."

"I'll come, then," said the stranger, "to drink your ale, and drive your deer. I can do both as well as e'er a man you'll find at the wedding, gentle or simple."

"I believe thee, boy," answered the elder, offering him the liquor; "drink again. I see thou canst find out the bottom of a flaggon, and I'll be bound for thee thou hast some skill in wood-craft. Didst ever hear the old woodman's song? Marry, I'll sing it thee if my breath and memory will serve."

In good king Harry's reign,
He was a jovial king,
There were three men,
Three stout woodmen,
And merrily they did sing.

Both the red and the fallow deer,
In speed outstrip the wind;
But I can stay the stag's career,
And check the gentle hind.

Oh I can draw a bow,
Beneath the green-wood tree;
And I can fall the bonny dun roe,
As he skips along the lea.

The fox hath many a sleight,
Said the last man of the three;
But I can stop the felon's flight,
For all his subtilty.

"Why, ay, my old fox," cried the stranger laughing "I see thou hast na' lost power o' carolling with thy teeth."

"Wherefore should I?" returned the old man with great glee. "I can do all my matters without teeth. I can drink without them, and, heaven be praised, eat without them too. But an old song doth gladden my heart, like the voice of an old friend. When I sing the song thou hast heard, it brings to mind the time when I followed the woodmen to the field. Ha, boy, many a day's sport have I had with that poaching knave Gibbie Onshaw o' the woodhead — a right deadly hand had Gibbie at the bow — there was no need

o' driving the deer to a stand for him to pick one out—he'd have brought ye down the finest crowned hart in the herd at the first flight—he was then a good servant, lad; but now, well-a-day—thou knowest Gibbie."

"No better than I know you!" replied the man. "What sort of fellow is he?"

"A gaunt grim gallows-looking knave," replied the janitor, "a fellow that doth carry in his face the evidence of his misdeeds—had Sir George pursued him rigorously, by this time he'd have been food for crows—then he has a son that's his very marrow for mischief—only the rogue's a good humoured lad, and that saves his bacon."

"Folk say the son's a comely lad of his years," said the stranger.

"Comely!" exclaimed the porter, "didst ever look at the stone monsters that grin upon the walls of the court? These are handsome to Anak—his height is somewhat like thine, but I wot bigger—then he has a face that would fright the devil, if he knew him not."

“ I trow, he is of a gentle spirit,” said the stranger.

“ Gentle, quotha !” returned the porter, “ yea, gentle enow when he’s in the hands of his betters. My certe, they say he was nigh having his weasand slit by the dagger of master Stanley. I know not what could bring the coward loon into quarrel with such a noble gentleman.”

“ Nay, gaffer, thou beliest him villainously,” said the stranger ; “ I’ve heard him noted as a valiant man.”

“ Then was it when he was drunk,” replied the porter. “ The veriest cowards are heroes in their cups ; and I wot when Gibbie taught his lad his own practices, he did not forget to train him to drunkenness — I’faith Anak’s an unlucky rogue — as great a thief, boy, as ever borrowed his neighbour’s goods without asking leave.”

“ I’ve heard his honesty commended,” said the stranger.

“ Honesty !” exclaimed the old man, turning up his eyes, “ well-a-day, ’tis a badt world we live in. Why, lad, Anak Onshaw would pick your pocket while he grinned in your face. The knave

hath some humour ; he's a merry kind of ~~devil~~, and takes kicks and blows with praise-worthy endurance, or he'd long ago have been driven the country."

" I never heard of his being a thief," said his companion.

" Did you not?" answered the porter. " Ah, boy, 'tis a sure sign that you know but little of this country. There's no man living in the Peak that knows not Anak, for as true a thief as ever peeped through a halter. Why, would ye believe it, boy? the knave came hither a few days ago, with that black-eyed cherry-cheeked rogue his sister, and while the steward was out of the hall, marry, he whips me up a huge lump of butter, and pops it into his breast."

" Did he so? Ha! ha! ha!" cried the stranger; " well, what then?"

" Ay, ay, all in good time, boy. Ha, ha, ha," replied the porter, holding his sides while he laughed; " well-a-day, well-a-day. Well, boy, master steward caught sight of the rogue's trick, and feigning they might be more at ease in the kitchen, he took and fixed Anak plump

afore the fire — ha ! ha ! ha ! and spite o' the grins and gruntings of the knave, he kept him there till the butter melted and ran through his hose. Ha ! ha ! ha !”

“ Ha, ha, ha,” cried the stranger ; “ belike, gaffer, the knave will never steal butter at Haddon again.”

“ I should think not,” returned the porter, “ nor aught else. But if he be ever caught in the fact, the cook swears he'll roast him and baste him with butter.”

“ Belike he was roasted and basted enow,” said the man.

“ Marry, I think the women of his family have more grace,” said the gallant janitor. “ There's the pretty Rose, his sister, would steal nought but men's hearts ; in that way, certes, she's a greater thief than her brother ; and then old Constance, though she has the look of a witch, is a honest woman in her way ; truly, she would not pilfer a mouthful of bread, boy, an it would save her from starving.”

“ The more fool she,” answered the man ; “ 'tis proof enow, I trow, that she's no witch.”

“ But then she talks in such a fear-

some way!" continued the loquacious porter, "and she pulls such horrible faces, that folk cannot help likening her to somewhat elvish."

"Faith, an she would not steal to save her family from starving," said the man, "she's not overgood. She is without bowels."

Their conversation was put an end to by the entrance of the Jesuit, who inquired who it was that wanted him.

"May it please your honour," said the porter, with a low obeisance, "this man hath a message to your lordship, but he will not discover his person."

"Who art thou?" said the Jesuit, "and what is your business?"

"I will answer both questions when we are alone," replied the stranger; "there's a pair of ears too many here."

"Friend," said the Jesuit to the janitor, "leave us together awhile."

"Please your worship," replied the curious old man, "does your worship think it safe to be alone with this man? There are many wild fellows in our country."

“ There is nothing to fear, master porter,” returned the Jesuit; “ I know not if I have any enemies here or elsewhere — go, thou mayst leave us alone.”

The janitor, with considerable reluctance, quitted the lodge, the door of which he left partly unclosed; but this trick was in a moment detected by the keen eyes of the stranger, who not only closed but barred the entrance. He then threw aside his cloak, and exhibited to the eyes of the Jesuit the face and figure of his nephew, the crafty Anak Ollerenshaw.

“ Anak !” cried the Jesuit, “ in heaven’s name what hath brought thee hither? and wherefore comest thou disguised.”

“ I come,” answered the woodman with great seriousness, “ because a priest is wanted to bury a dead kinsman, and who so fit as a man of his own blood? You’ve heard, belike, of Philip Hartle’s murder.”

“ I have, I have,” cried the Jesuit, with great emotion, “ I have heard of it, and but for circumstances, would have keenly resented this flagrant outrage.”

“Resent!” cried the mountaineer, whose swarthy features grew red with rage; “leave revenge to the strong hand — to me and those who league with me. I knew not yestermorn that the mad-brain Ashby was kin to me, or when I found him striving with that devil, his deathsman, I would have driven my knife into Stanley’s throat.”

“Be at peace, nephew,” said the Jesuit, whose political foresight assured him that Stanley’s death would be the upshot of their affairs, and unwilling to give up the recovery of England to the popish faith even for the punishment of his brother’s murderer; “be at peace, the time, at present, is out of sorts — leave this manslayer to the justice of heaven, and doubt not but it will, ere’t be long, overtake him.”

“I come disguised,” continued Anak, “because I would not have master Stanley know whither you go — I mean, if you will stoop so low, holy father, as to follow me — there may be some present that it will be as well Stanley should not know of. For this time, I will not med-

dle of him, but he's working a mine that'll bury him."

"Where bury you the dead man?" said the Jesuit.

"Beside the house," answered Anak; "his grave is dug — the body might have been thrown in, but mother would have him prayed o'er — she would not have him buried like a dog, though he lies not in holy ground."

"Let his grave be like that of the mariner," replied the Jesuit; "the waters receive the sailor's corpse — let the green turf of the forest be opened for our kinsman — necessity directs both. Peradventure, in happier times, the body may be removed to a more holy cemetery."

"And if not, uncle," returned the woodman, "I wot he'll sleep as well."

"My prayers shall not be wanting for his soul's repose," replied the Jesuit; "the body will doubtless lie undisturbed."

"Yea, and the wild wind that he loved to hear will blow o'er his grave," said Anak, with a good deal of enthusiasm — "the silver Wye, that he loved to gaze on in his melancholy fits, will rush beside him

—his ghost may sit on the green hillock, and hear the shrill cry of the brown moorcock as he flits across the dale. — Remove his body! nay, bury me beside him, I would wish no holier ground. But this is no time to talk — an ye be ready, let us out and to the woodhead.”

“ I will but send the porter for my cloak, and attend ye instantly,” said the Jesuit, at the same time opening the door, and seeking the janitor, whom he dispatched to the hall for his upper garment. In the meantime, and when Anak had scarcely been left to himself for half a minute, in which time, however, he had again assumed his cloak, the deputy-porter made his appearance, and depositing a small basket on the table, again quitted the lodge. The spirit of the knavish woodman was now somewhat above its ordinary pitch; but as he surveyed the basket, he found it impossible to overcome his desire of inspecting and appropriating the contents. On uncovering it, he found it to contain half of a capital ham pye, with a couple of stoutly fortified custards, which were doubtless

intended for the supper of the porter and his deputy. But Anak, who thought it meritorious to balk the appetite of his late companion and his understrapper, thrust his arm through the handle of the basket, and enveloped it with his cloak, leaving those who had counted upon enjoying these delicious morceaux to make another application at the buttery-hatch. He had scarcely performed this feat before the porter appeared with the cloak, and the Jesuit, enveloping himself in its ample folds, passed the gate with his kinsman.

CHAP. VIII.

Nay, by this light, he is affeared of bugbears,
The very goblins of a child's creation,
That men o' the common mind and mark would slight,
Would never budge at, — he doth fondly deem
Nature's abortions, and the fearful sprites
Of the dread Cabala.

THE REFORMADO CAPTAIN.

“**P**IZE on 'em both,” cried the porter in a pet, after he had closed the gate upon the pretended count and his kinsman; “shut the door that one might not peep — this is mighty countly, I wot — but I was up to 'em, for all their craft — I got a sight as the door opened, and if that long impudent varlet be not Anak Onshaw, then will I be no more Michael Strongbolt! — ha, the knave. I had some little misgiving it was that brat of a witch while we talked together; and I gave him a sweetener — I think I did — ha! ha! But where's Rowland? There is the clock telling nine, and no supper — why Rowland! boy — I tell thee, Rowland,

— dost thou hear, varlet — Rowland — heaven and earth what a clatter that bell makes — 'tis enow to deafen a smith — there, 'tis nine, sure enow — time for all honest men to be a-bed — and yet must these old limbs keep watch for the return of the count — heaven amend him with a touch of the ague, say I — why Rowland! thou bat, thou stock-fish, thou stone.”

“ Well, what want ye ?” said the deputy, thrusting his head in at the door; “ what devil’s whim makes ye raise such a cry-out.”

“ Come in thou knave,” cried the elder, rising from his seat in a violent passion, “ thou hast no more ears than a Lathkill trout. Where’s my supper, thou brainless jack-a-lent.

“ Why did ye not look about afore ye made this rout ?” said the deputy. “ I brought your supper long since. Stop your gullet weet, and leave me to my own business.”

“ Business, knave,” exclaimed the porter, “ thy business, I wot, is neither more nor less than telling a pack of lies and

trumpery to some fool of a kitchen wench."

"It's no business of yours, whate'er it be," said the man.

"Rot thy business," continued the porter, looking about for some evidence of his supper; "find me the meat, knave, and thou mayst go hang — thou hast brought none here, or here 'twould be."

"None of your tricks, old Mickie," said the deputy; "you've eat the pye and the custards, and I'm to go without supper."

"Knave," ejaculated the porter, bestowing a sound buffet upon the ear of his underling, "I will learn thee to play thy tricks upon me. — Cullion! thou hast devoured all, and wouldst charge me with thine own knavery."

"Thou'rt an old pilfering thief," cried the deputy, seizing him by the throat, and giving him a hearty shake. "Here's the flagon as empty as if I had never brought thee any ale, and canst thou deny that I did, thou pampered old glutton."

"Stay, stay," said the porter, "I am

perhaps i' the wrong boy — who was here when thou didst bring the supper?"

"That tall fellow i' the cloak," answered the deputy; "he stood by the door, when I set the basket on the table."

"Odd's my life," cried Strongbolt, clapping his hands together, "as sure as I am seventy-one years old come Martinmas, that dog for a horse-pond stole the basket; and if any other proof were wanted beside mine own eyes, this would satisfy me that the thief was — but hold thy tongue Michael — hold thy tongue, an thou art wise — least said, soonest mended."

"What man wast?" said the deputy.

"Nay, Rowley," replied the old man, with a significant smirk, "I am not to furnish thee with weapons to drive me out of my place — an I do, I'll consent to exchange with thee, without giving thee the trouble to oust me. But go, go boy — fetch another flagon of ale, and fresh provision — haste thee."

The deputy, after some grumbling, quitted the lodge; and master Strong-

bolt, having trimmed his lamp, sat down on his bed to await the arrival of his supper. He had not sat long, however, before a knock flattered him that Rowland had made extraordinary haste, and he rose from his couch to open the door with extraordinary complacency. But instead of his underling appearing with a fresh supply of victuals, he was obliged to make way for two men who pressed into the lodge, and who, upon coming into the light, turned out to be Edward Stanley and the German colonel. Bowing down almost to the ground, master Strongbolt desired to know their honour's commands, and entreated them to be seated; but Stanley refused, and said, "Prithee, friend, who was't came for the Count du Prat?"

"I thought your worship had known," answered the porter, fearful of entangling himself in what seemed on all sides a mystery.

"If I had known, greybeard," replied Stanley, "I had not come hither to ask you."

"The messenger wore a large cloak,

may it please your honour," said Strongbolt, "and carefully hid himself from sight."

"Nevertheless you penetrated through the cloak, and detected this man of mystery," said Stanley abruptly; "I know you did — therefore declare who he was."

"Sir!" cried the old man, hesitating between the wish of keeping aloof from any scrape, and the fear that Rowland had informed Stanley of his knowledge of the stranger.

"What, thou art bribed to silence?" cried Stanley, not giving him time for reflection, and drawing out his purse. "Look ye, knave, if thou wilt reveal this fellow to me, here's for thy pains — if thou doest refuse, I will lay about thine old bones with the flat of my sword till thou art a mummy in every joint;" and suiting the action to the word, he drew his sword, which he held in his right hand, and with the left offered a rial to the terror-struck porter, who, without further hesitation, clutched the money.

“ Though your honour, begging your honour’s grace, doeth surely mistake in saying I was bribed to silence,” began the porter.

“ Curse thine impertinence,” cried the furious soldier ; “ I care not whether thou be bribed or no — who is the man ?”

“ I will not say but out of curiosity, or as fate would have it,” continued Strongbolt.

“ Get on, thou talkative rascal,” cried Stanley.

“ I did get a glimpse at the messenger’s person,” said the porter.

“ And who was he ?” said Stanley.

“ If my eyes served aright,” replied Strongbolt, with great deliberation, “ and they are not wont to deceive me, the man was, I think —— ”

“ Who, devil !” cried Stanley, gnashing his teeth with impatience.

“ No, heaven and our lady forbid,” cried the porter, crossing himself. “ Sinful am I, sure ; but the saints preserve me from being left alone with the devil for a minute’s space.

“ The man, villain !” cried Stanley, striking the porter several times over the shoulders with the flat side of his rapier ; “ the man, rascal ! who was he, knave ?”

“ Anak Onshaw, your honour, Anak Onshaw, son of old Gilbert o’ the wood-head,” cried the porter as loud as he could, whilst Sparandam grinned horribly at his contortions.

“ Open the gate, rascal,” said Stanley, “ and let us out.”

Without a word of reply, Strongbolt took down his key, and opened the wicket, through which Stanley and his companion passed, and took the way to the woodhead.

The night was such an one as would have made most men agree with Lear’s fool, that “ he that hath a house to put’s head in, has a good head-piece.” It was a night wherein most would have preferred the comforts of the fireside to speculations, however romantic, out of doors ; nay, those ensconced within the chimney nook might derive a double portion of enjoyment from comparing their own warm and cheerful situation with

that of those who were forced to abide the storm, which they could hear roaring and whistling without. Much rain did not fall, but the "high winds did so sorely ruffle," that Stanley and Sparandam, as they descended the kind of esplanade from the gate, were nearly blown off their legs, and were obliged to hold together for support. The moon was out, but the driving masses of clouds, which the wind impelled furiously through the sky, almost entirely interrupted her light; still, however, there was sufficient to shew the soldiers whither they were going.

"Dost know the road, Stanley?" said Sparandam; "we came a cursed uncouth way from the hag's cabin to Haddon."

"I know it every foot," answered Stanley; "we shall soon make the place. Little dream they what is in the wind. — Monsieur le Comte, methinks, in thus consorting with our foes, for on my conscience yon outlaw is against us, has but ill demeaned himself. If he gets a blow in the fray, let him look to it."

"I have no fear of him," replied

Sparandam, "he is right enough — he is too deep in the plot, beside his being Jesuit, to flinch from the work."

"Why seeks he then his beggarly kindred?" said Stanley; "it is the way to betray us all — and why stands he aloof with me, because I slew that crazy brained heretic his brother? The world was well rid of such an idiot — may I but catch the original I took him for, and I'll send both their ghosts packing together."

"Geists!" repeated the German, looking around him.

"Ay, by my troth," said his companion, "and that old witch shall keep them company."

"Let her rest, let her rest," said the German hastily; "thy hand will be red enough."

"What, Sparandam!" exclaimed Stanley, "a fellow of thy complexion grow faint-hearted! why, man, I've seen thee do more than take a life, when the deed advantaged thee nothing."

"Wehe mir," cried the German, "in the battle — when my spirit has been up,

I have wrought evil—I have done deeds, 'tis like, which now I would not think on. Fool was I to leave the Vernon's hall for this waste wilderness, perhaps to become the prey of the night fiend."

"Of thine own folly, man," cried Stanley; "what can harm thee, save flesh and blood, and stout must he be too that durst set upon thee. Do thou take charge of our mortal foes, and I will engage all the fiends ~~and devils~~ that dare assail us."

"Thou'rt an unbeliever, Ned Stanley," said the superstitious German, "a desperate fool, to be taught only by fatal experience—but I bid ye, sir, keep back your blasphemies now, or I hold ye for my foe."

Agitated violently with terror, Sparandam halted, and laid his hand upon his sword.

"I think," he continued in a wild tone and savage demeanor, "the devil must have lured me out, when I was persuaded to bear thee company—thee that art a scoffer of all things holy, that hast no

touch of religion in thy soul — that art, in fact, if not a devil now, in training for thy vocation hereafter.”

“ If thy words be true,” replied Stanley smiling, “ the better able am I to protect thee against the designs of my brotherhood.”

“ I will not go with thee,” said the German, casting a glance upon the way they had come ; “ thy business at the woodhead is none of mine — thou would'st but drag me deeper into ~~hell~~ *perdition* why should I aid thee in the murder of a man that has not done wrong to me ? or bury my dagger in the throat of a woman for thy pleasure ? I will not do't, come what betide.”

“ Thou shalt along with me, Sparandam,” said Stanley ; “ I have held with thee, and I will not be deserted.”

“ I will not go,” returned the German obstinately.

“ Thou shalt,” said Stanley, planting himself in the middle of the avenue, so as to prevent his return.

“ I will not go forward a step,” cried

the German, drawing his sword; "and if thou dost let my return, I will cut thee into ribbons — villain, give way."

"Traitor!" cried Stanley, endeavouring to pluck his rapier from the scabbard; but before he could bare his weapon, the German seised him by the collar, and giving him a swing round as one would a child, threw him on the turf, and made off down the avenue.

"Curse on thee, herculean brute," cried Stanley, leaping on his legs, and running after his companion, "stop or I will shoot thee dead. Stop, coward, and fight, or I will take 'vantage of my pistol."

But the German, whose obstinacy was proof against the threats of his comrade, proceeded without slackening his pace; and Stanley, not wishing to push the matter further, and perceiving that there was no chance of persuading Sparandam to go on with him, had already halted, when, at the turn of an avenue by which they came, he perceived through the dim moonlight the figure of a man dart out of one thicket into another. The

German instantly stopped and fell to the ground, while Stanley hastened forward to discover the stranger. At the place where the man disappeared, he found a narrow path; but so dark and gloomy that he could make no observation how far it extended; though he conjectured it to be one of the smaller walks which ran between the great avenues of the park; and as these branched off in many directions, he concluded there would be no chance of overtaking the man, who was doubtless well acquainted with the intricacies of the wood. Thus disappointed, the vigilant soldier knelt down and put his ear to the ground, but the murmuring rush of the river, and the loud wailing of the wind, as its keen blast agitated the tops of the lofty trees, would have prevented him from hearing the steps of the fugitive, had he been near at hand.

“The fellow has escaped,” said Stanley, as he rose from the ground, “and through the fears of this fool. Marry, ’tis strange that so valiant a fellow as Sparandam should be such an ass, such a

visionary. Now will he insist that this will-o'the-wisp is the ghost of mad Ashby."

He took hold of the German's arm, and endeavoured to arouse him from his swoon, for he had actually fainted with terror; but for some time the only testimony of his being alive was a perpetual shivering which held him from head to foot. Whether he was capable of hearing any thing whilst in this situation, Stanley could not tell; but when, after a great deal of exertion, Stanley had brought him to himself, and he opened his eyes, the German sprang from the ground, grasped his sword in one hand, clutched the arm of his companion tightly with the other, and pressing closely up to him, said, in a low tone, "I saw it, Ned Stanley, the very figure; his eyes glared savagely. I am stark with fear."

"Saw!" said his companion; "saw what?"

"Didst not mark it?" replied the German, clinging to him, and looking down the avenue, "Did ye not see the—the gho—the figure of-a-gh——? Let

us return to the castle, if thou dost value my life at aught."

"Quell thy fears, for shame," said Stanley; "they would disgrace a half-grown lad. I saw a figure, man; what of that? It was some poacher I'll be sworn, that has a design upon the knight's deer, not upon our persons."

"Poacher!" returned the German, with a look of subdued reproach. "Didst ever see me shrink from man, Ned Stanley? wherefore should I now? No, it was the man you slew."

"How know ye that?" said Stanley; "you never saw him."

"Have I not?" replied the German. "Marry, it may be so; but his grim aspect is now graven on my memory. Let us return."

"No," answered Stanley, who perceived that the fears of his companion would not suffer him to return to the hall alone; "I will not cheat my fortune for any man's folly. As you will not assist me, I will not ask your company; and so let us part."

"No, I will not," cried the German,

retaining his hold forcibly upon the arm of Edward Stanley ; “ I will not quit thee, traitor. Thou hast brought me into the midst of thy fiends ; I will have thy countenance to outface them.”

“ Then bestir yourself,” said Stanley ; “ for I cannot stay here all night. ’Tis odds now but my rival has escaped, and if he has, the fault is yours.”

“ Be it mine,” replied the German, sticking closely to him as he walked onward ; “ and whatever else thou canst invent to blame me withal. I will attend thee ; lead on.”

At a round pace the two soldiers proceeded through the wood, Sparandam maintaining a profound silence, though at the same time he kept an excellent look-out, lest he should be surprized by some of the tribe of goblins he so much dreaded ; and Stanley venting execrations at his idle fears, which had been the means of losing them the discovery of the man who had escaped. To the taunts of his companion, however, the German either paid no attention, or resolved at this time not to notice them ;

but suffered him to vent his spleen without interruption or opposition. In these humours they had arrived at the end of the avenue which opened on the bank of the river, when, coming across the wooden bridge by which it was passed, they beheld the figure of the fugitive. He approached them with great unconcern, whilst Stanley reconnoitred him as he advanced, and Sparandam, again choked with terror, pointed towards him with his sword. The man was clad in a forester's dress, which made Stanley at first think it was his rival, but a nearer sight undeceived him. He did not stop when he came nigh them, but said, "Good night, Sirs."

"Who art thou?" said Stanley.

"Wat Needham, an it please ye," replied the man; "one of his worship's woodmen."

At this reply the German sank the point of his sword, and recovering his breath, drew nigh to the woodman, and said, "Was it thou that crossed the avenue nigher Haddon a while ago?"

"Yes," answered Needham.

“ Why didst thou fly ? ” said Stanley.

“ Because I saw two men wi’ naked swords,” answered the woodman. “ I guess ye were they ; and I then reckoned ye unfarrantly folk ; but I see now ’tis your honour Master Stanley—I know not that gentleman.”

“ For a woodman, good fellow,” said Stanley “ thou art mighty fearful.”

“ Two against one’s odds,” replied Needham ; “ and truth to tell, I went to get assistance to take ye, but I could find none ; the keepers are off their stance.”

“ Hast thou seen the outlaw abroad to night ? ” said Stanley.

“ No,” answered the woodman ; “ I have not seen a man i’ the park to night, save your honours.”

“ Where goest thou now ? ” said Stanley.

“ To my ward on Cawton,” returned Needham. “ It’s o’ that side there’s most stalking and poaching.”

“ Then you keep no woodmen on this side ? ” said Stanley.

“ Yea, some,” replied Walter, “ but

not nigh as many in the dale as on the hill. Ye see there be so many roads through the wood to the hall, that if a fellow could kill a deer, he'd be right hard set to get it out o' the park without being taken o' some hand."

"True, good fellow," said Stanley, taking the woodman by the arm. "Then it seems thou didst not come down thus far to alarm the keepers."

"No, I did na," answered Needham.

"What was your errand?" said Stanley.

"My errand!" repeated the woodman.

"Ay, fellow, your errand!" said Stanley fiercely. "What made you leave your ward on the hill to come down hither?"

"I have not been to th' stance yet," said the man, "so I could not leave it."

"Churl!" cried Stanley, shaking him by the throat, "if thou dost not answer quickly, I'll put thee into the river."

"I shall care but little for that," replied Needham, "an ye'll let me get out again."

“Hound!” cried Stanley greatly enraged, “dost think I jest?”

“Yes, what else?” said the woodman. “A noble gentleman like your honour would never else lay hands on a poor lad like me. I’ve done your honour no wrong.”

“This shall not serve,” said Stanley; “the wind of my fortune blows aside nicety. I have weighty reasons for knowing where thou hast been; and I will know before we quit this spot, or thy body, knave, shall find its resting place beneath that water.”

“A mighty matter, truly,” said Needham, “to make such a stir about. Well sirs, an ye must be told, I’ve been seeing a young wench, Rose Onshaw, o’ the woodhead; and now what better are ye.”

“And whom saw ye there?” said Stanley.

“Where? at the homestead?” said the woodman.

“Aye, at the homestead, as thou dost call it,” answered Stanley; “what persons were there?”

“Marry, ye might as well ask the foot-

tree of that bridge," replied Needham ; " I did not go in, Rose came out to me."

" How knew she thou wert awaiting her," said Stanley.

" I signed to her I was bye hand," said Needham.

" Thou signed, der teufel," cried the German ; " she could not see through the walls."

" Nay, but she could hear," returned the woodman, with great boldness. " I whistled like a moorcock, after this fashion ;" and with great correctness he whistled the whirring note of that bird.

" Well, woodman," said Stanley " we are like to take thy word for truth, whether it be so or no. And thou wilt do us the further courtesy to turn back, and bear us company to the woodhead."

" Nay, sirs," said Walter, " that I cannot do ; it were as much as my place is worth to leave my ward untenanted."

" Thou hast left it untenanted since night-fall," said Stanley ; " thy further neglect can make little odds. But I

will be thy surety with Sir George, he shall excuse thee."

"Pize on it, sirs!" exclaimed Needham; "ye know not his worship as well as I do that have cause. Its his way to turn off every man that does not his duty, be he called away by any matter never so pressing. He'd knock me off the woodmanship, and laugh at me withal for being such a fool as to mind your honours."

"Why, then, master woodman," said Stanley, "I fear thou wilt be obliged to take thy discharge, for sure enough thou must go along."

"Nay, but sirs," said Needham, endeavouring to release himself from the gripe of Stanley; "but bethink ye I'm a poor fellow."

"If thou be'st as poor as a churchmouse," said Stanley, "it will not avail thee; thou hadst better remain poor than contend now with me. Beside, fellow, I will make that sweet wench thou dost call thy sweetheart rich; and then thou mayst become so by marrying her."

"Say nought o' that, Master Stanley,"

returned the jealous woodman. "Say nought o' that. I know you are fierce and savage enow; but an ye jape me o' that subject, ye shall hack me to pieces where I stand, afore I'll budge one foot towards the woodhead."

"Nein, nein!" cried the German. "Forward!"

"What!" cried Stanley, with a sneer. "Jealousy, plain jealousy, in a clod. Ha! ha! get on with thee, fellow; I thought thou hadst been happier than fools of higher nurture."

He pushed the woodman before him across the bridge, and they walked at a pace which Needham's sullenness rendered dilatory, until they came in sight of the woodhead.

"There, ye're at it," said the man, sulkily; "now let me begone."

"Let thee go indeed!" replied Stanley; "thou hast yet to begin the work for which I brought thee hither. I did not need to be told the way. Stand by sir, and be silent, as thou dost value thy cod's head. Sparandam, look to him."

He then left the woodman in the hands of the German, and advancing to the cottage with silent and careful steps, took a survey of the scene that was passing therein.

CHAP. IX.

Anne. What, do you tremble? Are you all afraid?
Alas! I blame you not: for you are mortal,
And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil. —
Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body,
His soul thou canst not have; therefore begone.

RICHARD THE THIRD.

ON approaching the window of the cottage, which Edward Stanley could do securely under the shade of the surrounding trees, he perceived at a glance that his chief hope, the expectation that had led him thither, was frustrated. The cottage was faintly enlightened by a couple of dim tapers that burnt at the head of a bier, upon which lay the shrouded corpse of the unfortunate Ashby, over which the Jesuit was engaged in performing a mass for the dead, whilst the family of Ollerenshaw, kneeling around, appeared by their gesticulations to join in the prayers of their relative. There were no others present, and as the service had

already commenced, it was plain that no other persons were expected to attend. All of them, even the coquet Rose and her knavish brother, seemed struck with awe and devotion; the father preserved a gloomy but fixed countenance, whilst the face of his wife, when she unclasped her hands from it, exhibited a wonderful mixture of sorrow, anger, and enthusiasm. At times she rang a small bell which she held in her hand, the sound of which the common people of that age deemed efficacious in frightening away the evil spirits that hovered around the corpse of a newly dead person.

Whilst Stanley was yet looking in at the window, he heard a noise behind him, and, presently, the voice of the German, who in a fierce and gruff, but under tone, said, “*Der feind ! where am I got ?*”

At the same moment, the dame, who had perhaps been alarmed by the noise, rang her bell with great vivacity; and Stanley, having turned round, saw by the “struggling moonbeam’s misty light” his friend the colonel up to his neck in the grave prepared for Ashby.

“Help me out of this pit,” cried the German, holding out his arms, “you woodman—Ned Stanley—haste. Am I to be buried, think ye, afore my time. Hasten, there are swarms of fiends about me now.”

“Ill be sworn thy bell will fright them away,” replied Stanley approaching him, “as well as Dame Ollerenshaw’s. Couldst thou not get out thyself?”

“No,” said Sparandam; “lend me thy hand quickly, or I’ll halloo out and spoil thy sport. Am I to stay in this den of devils?”

“Needham!” said Stanley to the woodman who stood by, scarcely able to repress his laughter, “give him thy hand, and pull stoutly, or he’ll down; he’s no feather.”

By the exertion of both their strengths the German was at length raised from his uncomfortable situation; and with greater care, he and Stanley, accompanied by the woodman, took their station beside the window. The door was open, and the voice of the Jesuit, as he performed the solemn ritual, sometimes escaped from

the cottage, and mingled with the rude blasts of the wind, which, as Sparandam heard, awed his superstitious soul, and made his teeth chatter in despite of his manhood.

“Thou seest,” he whispered into the ear of Stanley, “thy rival is not here ; let us away while we can. The holy father will drive away the fiends from his kinsman’s corse, and they will beset us.”

“So much the better,” replied Stanley ; “I came out for sport. But thou canst not tell that the outlaw is not at hand. Let us see the end of this affair, and then we can look for him.”

“Mein herz, comrade,” said the German, “it is sore looking in a dark night ; and specially I take it in a thick wood.”

“The night’s clear enough,” answered Stanley. “Set me before my man, and if I do not pink him at the first pass, say I’ve no skill in my weapon.”

“Der teufel !” said the German, with a sneer. “I dare say you’ll pink him when you find him ; but you’ll not catch him to-night, save he be in the humour.”

Without attending to the German’s

taunt, Stanley said to Needham, "Knowest thou the meaning of this office?"

"Yes," replied the woodman boldly ;
"It's the death-prayer of mad Ashby, the man you shot in Chatsworth park."

"Who told thee I shot him?" said Stanley.

"Many told me," replied Needham ;
"the men that were with ye."

"Where was the outlaw then?" said Stanley.

"Marry, in heaven, for what I know!" said the woodman ; "he'd not been seen since yesternight. I wot ye chased him off the ground."

"How knowest thou that too?" said Stanley.

"Nay, marry, it's no secret, belike," answered the woodman ; "all the Peak knows on't afore this. The men that followed ye to Chatsworth park, and would not follow ye further, knew well the man ye sought."

"And could have found him too," said Stanley, "if it had pleased them, be-shrew the false traitors' hearts!"

"I said not so," returned Needham.

“ Ye might as well say I could find the outlaw.”

“ I would not wager my hope of Lord Derby’s land against ten testoons, that thou couldst not lead us to the very spot,” answered Stanley. “ But of one thing, good fellow, I assure thee, if I find thou dost fine-draw us with thy pretended ignorance, and assist to conceal this outlaw — this robber and draw-latch, thou shalt not go lacking thy reward. Thou dost see that stark body on the bier, and thou dost see this pistol at my girdle: one word of warning to my foe, and I will stretch thee out like that dead clod, though ten years stand between thee and my revenge.”

He said no more, for he perceived through the casement that the Jesuit had finished his office, and the rest had arisen from their knees. The wife of Ollershaw, having taken down a lamp which hung against the wall, and lighted it from one of the bier candles, placed herself at the foot of the body, whilst Anak and his father, taking hold of the handles of the bier or trellis, raised it from the

ground. The woodman's wife then gave her bell a hearty shake to clear the coast of improper intruders, and led the way in a measured pace to the grave, followed by the Jesuit and Rose. As they came forth from the cottage, Stanley and his companions retired beneath the trees, where they were screened from observation, and watched the performance of the funeral rites in silence.

The body was again set down at the side of the grave, and the Jesuit and his sister, uncovering the face of the corpse, gazed on it with a melancholy and lingering affection.

“Thou art then dead, Philip!” said the Jesuit, apostrophizing the body of his brother. “Thou art come to thy last and narrow lodging; — thou hast been a wanderer — thou hast at length found a home. Fare thee well, may thy soul be at peace!”

“His soul!” exclaimed his sister, “Why should it not? He is no murderer. Wayward was he, and dark of spirit, but no murderer.” Let the man that slew him look to the peace of his own soul,

if he be not cursed already. Let the murderer turn pale, and quake in his heart when he thinks on this fearful deed. Let his cheek blanch, and his eyes flame, for he is a cursed man unto everlasting —”

“Peace! Constance, thou knowest not—” said her brother.

“What do I not know?” returned the woman. “Will that proud fellow repent him of sin?—Never—never.”

“He may repent,” said the Jesuit; “at least let us hope he will.”

“He hath done his worst to us,” continued the dame. “May the curse of an aged woman cleave to him. May he be limb-bound with some palsying plague that shall give him time to think of his deeds that are gone by; and as he ravel[s] up the murders his bloody arm hath wrought, may his brain whirl and madden, till he deems himself the prey of fiends and devils. Avaunt ye foul spirits from this body! Think not I call ye hither with my curses. Seek out your victim.”

“He is here, good dame,” cried Stan-

ley with a loud and deliberate voice, at the same time advancing to the body, followed closely by Sparandam, who appeared stupefied with horror, the woodman still remaining under the shadow of the trees.

“What !” exclaimed the woman, with a fearless and sarcastic tone, “have my curses raised the devil? Fiend! here thou hast no power. The soul hath escaped thy grasp. It hath got where thou wilt never come.”

“Mr. Stanley,” said the Jesuit, interposing, “this scene you may well believe doth agonize my sister’s heart; pardon her angry words, they are the offspring of her weakness.”

“I mind them not,” said Stanley, “let her fill the winds with her curses, they will blow over. But to thee, holy father, with my hand on this corse’s breast——”

“Touch not the body!” cried the woman, forcing his hand away from it with violent agitation; but he sternly bade her be silent, and holding her back with one hand, he placed the other upon the breast of the deceased enthusiast.

“To thee, holy father,” he continued, “I swear upon this relic of thy kinsman’s mortality, my sorrow and contrition for the deed that wrought his death. If I do not inwardly grieve for this unlucky act as much as thou or these thy kinsfolk can do, may the body rise, and denounce against me the pains of hell.”

He had scarcely made an end of speaking, when the corpse, either overbalanced by the weight of his hand which rested on its breast, or some other cause, turned on its right side, and the eyes which had remained open in the agonies of death, and which, although closed by his sister, had again expanded, now fixed their stony and withering glare upon the homicide, who for the first time in his life grinned with fear, and trembled in every nerve. The German sank upon his knees in an agony of terror; the Jesuit prayed audibly; Rose swooned upon the earth, and her mother rooted to the spot on which she stood, with her hands clasped together, gazed with expecting eyes upon the body of her brother. Some

moments of thrilling agony to all passed in silence, but at length Stanley with a violent effort broke the bands of his fear, and kicking the bier, body and all, into the grave, drew his dagger, and cried out in a rage "Curse upon your jugglery. I have been lured hither of purpose for this practice. Thou villain," he continued, griping Anak by the throat, "thou wert the knave that didst set this gin for me; but thou shalt find in't thine own ruin. Dog, I will strike the life out of thy gaunt carcass, and see if thou wilt rise to beard me with my sin."

The furious soldier flourished his poignard in the air, and would doubtless in his rage have added another to the long catalogue of his crimes, if his hand had not been stayed by the German, who, half mad with his fears, griped and shook the arm of his comrade with frenzied indignation.

"Hold your hand, feind!" he muttered into the ear of Stanley, agitated almost to tears. "Would you draw all the legions of hell upon us? Hold your

hand, or as sure as I have shed blood I will shed thine."

"He cannot do it," cried the woman with exultation. "He cannot shed the lad's blood, his arm would wither up like a rotten stick before his knife could touch my boy's throat. Get thee gone, man foresworn! the very dead arises to charge thee with perjury. Get thee gone, proud ruffian! — let the dead rest."

"Peace! thou yelling hag," cried Stanley, thrusting away Anak, who was glad to be released; "I meant not to harm the knave. If I sought his death it would neither be thy idiot threats, nor dead man's gibbering, that should let me."

"No, marry," replied the woman, tauntingly; "nor fear o'doom when thou shalt be called to join thy victim here; thou art over hardy for that. But is't your pleasure that this dead body be buried; or must the country hear that to murder you have added other sin? Has not this poor body suffered enow? Is the very clay itself so hateful to you, that it must not be mixed with earth?"

“ Proceed with your ceremonies,” said Stanley ; “ I did not mean to interrupt ye. If you had contented yourself, woman, with bemoaning your kinsman, you would not have seen my face to-night ; but your curses would call up Lucifer.”

“ I will not answer thee, thou man of a stony heart,” said the woman, with great emotion. “ I will not reproach thee again with our wrongs. I will not tell thee how dear he was to me, this brother that thou hast slain — I say thou — oh ! if I did, it might rouse thee again to passion.”

“ Fear me not, goody,” replied Stanley, with a smile ; “ I never was terrible to ancient women.”

“ Fear thee !” exclaimed Dame Ollershaw, “ I have known thee but some two days, and as I live by bread, in that short time I’ve feared thee more than ever I did mortal afore. But now, proud fellow ! I fear thee not. Grief hath set me above fearing thee or any man. For myself, I would not wag my finger to give thee pleasure, though to deny thee should cost my life.”

“Thy grief must needs be strong,” said Stanley, with a sneer, “for the death of a man thou wouldst have suffered to perish for want. I marvel the corpse does not arise, and reproach thee with thy hypocrisy.”

This taunt produced an irrepressible and convulsive agitation in the wife of Ollerenshaw, who clenched her fists, grinded her teeth, and for some moments endeavoured without effect to give vent to her rage; but at length her spirit took another turn, and she burst into tears, accompanied with exclamations of her grief which touched the hearts of all but the steely-hearted soldiers.

“Oh, Philip!” she exclaimed; “do they say I loved thee not? I that have tended thy years of infancy? I that have watched over thee when the foul fiend drove thee harbourless over the country? I that loved thee for thy very humour’s sake? Did I not love thee?”

“Peace, good sister!” said the Jesuit, with much affection. “Mr. Stanley has said he knows not what. Let it pass.”

“How long have I been pained for

him?" she continued. "What years of trouble have I passed through for his sake? And when thy cursed shot struck him, the fatal ball might have hit my own heart. Oh, that it had struck this old and withered breast, that I might not have lived to see this day! But is it thou that dost reproach me with lack of love to my brother? Is it thou, that hast neither love for brother nor sister, father nor mother — for nought living but thyself?"

"Holy father," said Stanley, in an impatient tone, "dost thou return to Haddon with us? If so, speed thine office, and make an end of this affair."

"Pardon me," replied the Jesuit; "I shall stay here until morning, I will then return to the hall."

"I like not that," returned Stanley; "we have matters of more weight to think on than any that can need your counsel here."

The Jesuit made no reply, but desired Anak and his father to descend into the grave, and place the body in a proper position. They were, however, both

too much afraid, after having beheld the scene which had lately passed, to come so nigh the corpse, and ventured only to draw up the bier, without coming in contact with their dead kinsman.

This effected, each of the persons present, except Stanley and Sparandam, threw upon the body a sprig of yew, or some other evergreen, in token of immortality ; and Gilbert Ollerenshaw and his son then set about filling up the grave with great dispatch. In a few minutes the loose earth was thrown in, and covered with the green sods that had been taken from the top, so that no one, unless he had been present at the interment, could have told that a body lay beneath. During the operation, not a word was uttered by any one. The Jesuit and his sister, with hands clasped together, continued to look into the grave, whilst Stanley and the German watched with less curious intent the completion of the woodman's labour ; and when the ground was closed up, and the dame and her family retired to their cabin, Stanley again asked the Jesuit, if

he did not mean to accompany them to Haddon.

“ My sister doth need consolation,” replied the Jesuit ; “ I cannot leave her in her distress.”

“ Your fond humour will betray us,” said Stanley, drawing him aside ; “ it is plain these churls know already that the Count du Prat is a Jesuit, and their near kinsman.”

“ They do know it,” replied the Jesuit ; “ but —”

“ Mind ye not what the woman told us at the very first,” interrupted Stanley, “ that neither her husband nor son were trustworthy.”

“ I have not trusted them,” returned the Jesuit ; “ they know that Sir George Vernon’s guest is an ecclesiastic, and their kinsman ; but how they know it I cannot tell. My sister swears she hath not betrayed us ; nay, the outlaw who hath been here to-night —”

“ To-night !” exclaimed Stanley. “ Where ?”

“ Here, within the cottage,” answered the Jesuit.

“And where is he now?” continued Stanley.

“He is gone,” replied the Jesuit; “half an hour’s space before you appeared he was with us, partaking of the service for the dead. A shrill note, like the cry of moorfowl, seemed to summon him away, for he rose from his knees, and hastily left the cottage.”

The Jesuit was yet speaking, when Edward Stanley quitted him, and darted into the thicket where he had left the woodman, Walter Needham, but the bird was flown, and he returned in a great rage to his companions.

“If this villain was here,” he said to the Jesuit, “why did ye not send me notice? Are my interest and honour like chaff of no value? Am I to run every risk for you and your cause, and you to pay no heed to mine?”

“What could I do?” replied the Jesuit, meekly. “Whom could I send to warn ye; There was no soul that I durst trust; and if I had turned again, they would sure have noted my intent.”

“Noted the foul-fiend!” cried Stan-

ley. "Hark ye, pretty Rose! Come hither wench. Thou hast taken that knave, Needham the woodman, into favour again. Hast thou seen him to night?"

"Marry, sir, an it please ye, I cannot tell," answered Rose, with a simper.

"Silly fool!" cried Stanley, clutching her by the arm; "this is no time for tricks. Answer, yea or nay. Hast thou seen Needham to night?"

"Perchance I may," replied the damsel, abashed.

"How long ago?" said Stanley. "Within this hour?"

"I cannot tell," answered Rose. "Perchance I may."

"And the outlaw was with him?" said Stanley. "Deny it not — I know he was."

The maiden did not reply.

"The outlaw was warned by him," continued Stanley, "that I sought him here. His moorcock's whistle was a signal to the outlaw, not to thee — a note of treachery, not of love."

"Truly, sirs, it may be so; I cannot

tell," replied the damsel, with an air of simplicity.

"Rose—this affectation of idiocy will not serve," said Stanley. "Thou art not wont to be so simple. Thou dost know what I have said is sooth; and thou knowest beside, if thou wilt tell, where this outlaw lies hid."

"Nay,'fore George!" cried the maiden, in affright at the soldier's allegation.

"Thou dost, I'll be sworn," cried Stanley; "and if thou dost conceal him from me, I will smite both thy lover and kin. I will fire this cottage, and lay it bare to the blast. Mind ye, girl, Needham hath betrayed his lord in thus warning the foe of his house of his danger."

"The outlaw is no foe o' Sir George's house," said Rose, still affecting the simpleton; "he'd fain be a near friend."

"A presumptuous villain!" cried Stanley, indignantly. "But Needham's life will pay forfeit for his treachery, if the Vernon come to know it. Now do thou take to thyself the merit of disclosing this outlaw's abode, and thy lover shall go unhurt. I swear it to thee."

“ He’ll not be hurt before he be catch’d, will he ?” said Rose.

“ Some knave hath taught thee a fool’s lesson, wench,” said Stanley, eying Rose with a penetrating look, “ which I would not trouble myself to expose, but for thy bright eyes.”

“ They thank your worship heartily,” said the rustic coquet, with an arch glance.

“ I see they do,” replied Stanley ; “ but now I would have other thanks than even the glances of love from so pretty a wench as thou art. Let me but know where I may find the skulking villain that I seek, and I will repay thee both with love and gold.”

“ I should ill deserve either if I did,” answered Rose, with more seriousness ; and then relapsing into her affectation, “ that is, if I knew, sirs ; and, i’fegs, I know no more than my uncle that’s dead.”

“ Thou wilt not believe me,” said Stanley, drawing a purse from his pocket, and holding it out to the damsel. “ Seest thou this purse — there are fifty of the queen’s

pictures in gold in't, wench. Take it—it is thine."

Rose shook her head.

"What! i'st not enough?" cried Stanley, with some surprize. "I've known a state-secret purchased for half the money."

"Mein herz!" ejaculated the German; "the wench is keen for her years."

"I fail of judgment," said the Jesuit, "if you do not wrong her."

"The secret, if't be one," said Rose, changing her manner entirely "is not to be bought. I'm no traitor, sirs; and ye do wrong me if ye hold me for one. Specially do you Master Stanley, for it is —"

"It is what, pretty Rose," said Stanley, taking her hand, which she withdrew hastily, blushing at the same moment.

"Folk thought," she continued, casting down her eyes, "that I let my head run too much on your honour—they thought right, though I denied it; for your honour was so kind and generous on the first night you came to this poor

cottage, I could do nought else but think of you."

"Well, what of that?" said Stanley. "I have not been kind or generous since — is that what you mean, Rose? But thou seest I am generous now, and kind and loving I will be when opportunity offers. Will this satisfy thee?"

"You clean mistake me, sir," said the damsel. "If I had known nought of you but from what I first saw, I should have loved ye dearly. But now, instead of the gay and generous Master Stanley, I see the fierce and wild man that shot our poor kinsman. Then I knew not he was so indeed; but the shot that struck him flashed red fire in my eyes, and fear to my heart. From that moment I loved ye not — I durst not love you. Mild are you now, and gay as a groom on his bridal day; but my mind flies back to the bloody scene in Chatsworth Park — I see your pistol levelled, and your foot striking the body of the dead man. I could not love a —" she shuddered and broke off.

"Murderer, thou would'st say," said

Stanley; “but, Rose, I am none. I did not slay your kinsman in the dark : had he been gifted with a stout heart, he had time to fight. But thou knowest I mistook the man.”

“I only know you killed him,” replied Rose. “But still the remembrance I have of that gay gentleman you was when you first came here, bids me withhold from you the abode of the outlaw. I refuse it ye, in pity, sirs ; for if ye knew it, and sought him, ye would rush upon death.”

“Do thou shew us the eyrie of this eagle,” said Stanley, “and leave it to us to take him.”

“I cannot, and I will not,” answered Rose. “To-night he would over face ye in strength, and to-morrow he will have flown his haunts. Fare ye well, sirs.”

The rustic beauty then, in spite of Stanley’s remonstrances, quitted him, and followed her relatives into the cottage.

CHAP. X.

L'incendie est dans sa fureur, dit le demon.

The fire rages, said the dæmon.

LE DIABLE BOITEUX.

THE conspirators, when left alone, continued for some moments to survey each other in silence ; but at last the German, with a cynical kind of look, said, " Ned Stanley, thou hadst best give up intriguing with women : here thou art thrown out again ; thy fortune has ever deserted thee since thou didst commence thy campaigns with them, and if thou dost not draw off, by St. Hugo, she will leave thee in the lurch."

" Think ye, then," replied Stanley, " that I am fool enough to quit this place without knowing that for which I came, the outlaw's haunt ? — and when, too, the girl confesses she holds the secret. I will not lay hands on her to force her

even by terror ; but if those churls do not answer me fairly, woe to their lives."

" You would not slay these men ? " said the Jesuit.

" I do not know but it would be best," replied Stanley ; " they in some sort know our plot, and as they are not of our party, must be counted foes."

" Not so," returned the Jesuit ; " let us first see what use they make of their knowledge, before we shed their blood."

" I tell thee, father," cried Stanley, " this milksop humanity will prove our direst foe. Let these fellows escape with our secret, and we shall have Rutland upon us, with his charge of horse from Nottingham."

" Himmelsdonner !" exclaimed the German, " that will not do ; to slay innocent men in a private feud is d—mn—ble sin, but not to destroy the public enemy."

" Right, comrade !" continued Stanley ; " and those fellows must prove themselves our friends, by discovering the lair of this beast of chace, or suffer the penalty of foes. Be it as it may, I will not trust a matter of so heavy import as ours

in the knowledge of a deer stalker : they shall both return with us to Haddon, that their lives may answer for our safety. If they are indeed our friends, they will be there in safe and hospitable keeping, and the first burst of our faction will set them free ; but if, as I suspect, they have played the traitors to their lord and us, the appearance of Elizabeth's guard will be a signal to strike off their heads. This, to my thought, is but honourable dealing."

"I will not gainsay it," said the Jesuit ; "but suffer me to explain to them your intention. They are roughly bred, and their plainness might chafe you."

"As ye will," said Stanley ; "but go they shall."

The Jesuit approached the door, which he found closed, and knocked gently for admission. At first no answer was returned, but on a second application he was spoken to by Anak Ollerenshaw, who asked his business.

"Open the door, son," said the Jesuit ; "I would confer with ye on a matter that concerns us all."

“ I may not draw bar nor bolt again to night,” returned Anak ; “ and to be plain with ye, father likes not your company.”

“ Tut, fool !” cried the Jesuit, fearful that his friends would overhear the bold reply of his nephew ; “ open forthwith, if ye would not suffer like him that we have just buried ; lose no time, draw your latch instantly.”

“ Fear not for us, Reginald,” said the woodman’s wife ; “ but hasten from this spot. This door shall never again open to the blood-thirsty men that are with ye ; — let them work their will, let the harmers look to their own harm.”

“ What ! do the churls refuse to come along ?” said Stanley, advancing to the door, followed by Sparandam ; “ we must teach them obedience then.”

“ Ye’ll need the help o’ Ritchie Lomas the carpenter, I wot, to get at us,” cried Anak withinside.

Stanley made no reply to this taunt, but setting his foot against the door with great violence, endeavoured to burst it in : it was however too stout and too

well barricadoed on the innerside to yield to his strength, or even to the combined powers of the two soldiers, who used great exertions to break it down. The efforts which Sparandam had made, like the first burst of a well-bred hunter, put him upon his mettle. He forgot his dreams of superstition, and recovered his usual hardiness and ferocity, whilst that sluggish feebleness which had for some time possessed him gave way to new spirit and vigour.

“Feuerholle!” cried he, drawing out his sword, and dashing it through the casement, “here is a way.”

“Ay,” cried Gilbert Ollerenshaw, extending the barrel of a short gun, then called a haque, through the aperture, “there’s a way, sure enow; but it’s be for buck shot through thy body, an thou durst come on.”

“Spitzbube!” cried the German in a rage, and laying hold of the muzzle of the haque, which Ollerenshaw, finding himself unable to retain, discharged at his fierce enemy. “Dog, vile hound,

thou hast shot beside the mark ; upon him Stanley -- the war is begun."

The report of the woodman's piece, which alarmed all the birds in the neighbourhood, and caused them to set up a general scream, the shouts of the soldiers, and their fierce attack upon the cottage, composed a scene as terrific as it was novel to the Jesuit, who made use of prayers and intreaties to put an end to the conflict ; but in vain ; for no sooner had Ollerenshaw fired his haque, than Stanley, overjoyed that the use of fire-arms had begun on the opposite side, approached the casement, and deliberately discharged his pistol through the breach in it. This shot was answered from within by a loud shout, which testified that it had done no damage.

" Hurra !" cried Anak, " ye shoot bravely ; ye'd kill a buck in fifteen year."

" This will not do," cried Sparandam ; " the witch will not be shot."

" If she will not be shot," replied Stanley, " she'll burn." And in despite of

the cries and prayers of the Jesuit, the desperate soldier set fire to the thatch of the cottage, by applying to it the heavy priming of his pistol.

“ Have mercy on them, Stanley ! Sparradam ! ” cried their colleague with vehement outcry. “ Murder them not thus — I will engage they shall go — they shall do as ye list — nay, though ye destroy me too, I will oppose you, bloody men.”

But his opposition, had he been powerful enough to have prevented the communication of the fire, was now too late to extinguish it. Fanned by the wind, the flames soon over-ran the roof, and in a few minutes the whole building was in a state of conflagration. The two soldiers, heedless of the reproaches of the Jesuit, stood within a few yards of the door, watching with eager eyes for the egress of the wretched inhabitants, who for some time knew not what to think of the crackling above their heads, and were only aroused, by the fire bursting through the thatch, to the horror and danger of their situation. The loud and piercing

shrieks of the women first informed the assailants that the flames had pierced the roof, and they evinced their triumph by cries of congratulation.

“ There will need no dog,” cried Stanley, to rouse these deer ; “ they will not harbour long I trow. What ho ! dislodge — dislodge ; — they’re tough devils, by my hilts — they will not break away.”

“ If the house be not too hot for them,” cried Sparandam, “ ’tis because they’re kin to that ~~dead~~ hag and zauberinn, for whom hell alone will be warm enough.”

While they were thus awaiting the progress of the furious element, the woodmen, unable any longer to bear the scorching heat, and fearful that the roof would fall in, and bury them under its ruins, tore down the door, and endeavoured to force their way out. Gilbert Ollerenshaw, who came first, bore his wife on his shoulder, and regardless of his adversaries, who both assaulted him, laid her upon the turf, half suffocated with the smoke. Anak came immediately after, and, in the hope of screen-

ing himself from the resentment of Stanley, who leaving the elder woodman to Sparandam, took charge of the son, bore in his arms the frightened indeed, but perfectly sensible Rose. The fierce libertine tore her from her brother, and clasped her round the waist, at the same time discharging a blow upon Anak's head, which beat him to the ground.

“ Dog! villain!” cried Stanley, clapping his foot upon Anak's breast and the point of his sword to his throat, “ confess thyself, confess thou art a traitor, and I will hack thy head off.”

“ Do not, do not,” cried Rose, clasping her arms round Stanley, so as to bind his from hurting her brother ; “ do not slay him, dear Master Stanley — he shall confess — he shall do as ye list — oh ! spare him — spare him.”

“ What should I spare him for ?” said Stanley. “ To aid my foes to strike at my life, to set me at the mercy of those who have none ; nay, wench, he shall die.”

“ He shall not die — indeed he shall not,” cried the damsel, sobbing out her

intreaties. "He is my own brother, and what has he done? Has he robbed ye? Has he betrayed ye yet?"

"That I know not," answered Stanley; "but how got he knowledge that Sir George Vernon's guest was your kinsman? Answer me that."

"My father knew him," replied Rose; "he held him in mind, though he said nought at the time; — but they have not betrayed ye — indeed they have not."

"Why feared they to come forth?" said Stanley. "Wherefore did thy father fire on us?"

"I know not indeed," replied the maiden, whose senses wandered with very terror.

"There was no shot i' the haque," said Anak, raising his head, "or his worship would not be standing there as brisk as he is, after old Gilbert Onshaw had cracked."

The Jesuit, had with great difficulty, restrained the German from putting the finishing stroke to both Gilbert Ollershaw and his wife. The former was wounded, and could make no resistance;

and the latter, whom Sparandam feared more than any other person, for those faculties of supernatural agency which he esteemed her to possess, was still in a state of semi-suffocation; and the German conjectured that he could never find a better time than the present to knock her and her enchantments in the head. But the Jesuit, calling all his authority to his aid, and protesting that he would instantly quit England if he did not give up his inhuman attempt, forced Sparandam, though with great reluctance, to leave the supposed witch and her husband to recover their hurts. Stanley also, somewhat melted by the entreaties of Rose, and by her blandishments, which she did not spare, suffered her herculean brother to arise from the ground, who, as soon as he regained his erect position, gave himself a hearty shake, like a Newfoundland dog, and addressing himself to Stanley, said, "Marry, sir, an father and I had known ye were armed with dags, we had not letten your coming into the cottage; but, ye see, we trowd ye could not break

through stone walls with sword and dagger."

"I thought thou hadst learned enough in opposing me before," said Stanley.

"Why, to be sure I ought," answered Anak; "but they say a wilful man wont be taught; but we have paid dear enow for't this time, by'r lady."

The woodman looked upon the mass of burning ruins which the cottage now exhibited, and groaned deeply with vexation at his incapability of avenging the injury. The roof now fell in, and for a short time suffocated the fire in the rubbish; but after smouldering and throwing out immense volumes of smoke, the flames again burst forth, and communicating with the branches of some of the surrounding trees that were withered, wrapped them also in conflagration, whilst the more fresh and green foliage, upon which the fire would not fasten, cracked and hissed with amazing fury. The wind, agitating the ignited trees, waved their branches, streaming with flames, to and fro in the air, scattering myriads of sparks over the wood, which appeared against the

sky like a host of meteors ; and as any remaining part of the cottage fell in, a new burst of smoke and flame lighted up the ruins, and illuminated the place where the group stood.

The soldiers, at the Jesuit's intreaty, had for some time awaited the recovery of dame Ollerenshaw ; but finding that, although somewhat restored to the use of her senses, she could not possibly walk to Haddon, they ordered Gilbert and his son to place her on the bier, and bear her forward.

“ And whither would ye take me ? ” said Constance ; “ I need not go far to die — my hour is on me — let me lie by my brother.”

“ Forward, forward ! ” cried Stanley, “ she'll dream of death until this time to-morrow ; there's room enough to die, and to live too at Haddon. Get onward, knaves.”

“ Vorwärts,” cried the German, “ the fire will be on us if we stay longer.”

“ Ye do but fly from your fate,” said the woman ; “ these flames but scorch the body.”

"Hässlich furie!" cried Sparandam, "quit thy clamour, or I'll heave thy ~~dead~~ carcass into the flames; onward villains, or I shall goad ye."

"Onward then," said the woman; "if I may not lie beside Philip Hartle, fain would I see Haddon walls once more."

Her husband and son, assisted by her brother, placed her with great care and tenderness upon the bier; and the Jesuit threw over her his cloak. They then raised the bier, and proceeded towards Haddon by the road the soldiers came. As they went along, Stanley used every means his wit could suggest to draw the secret of the outlaw's retreat from Rose. He flattered, threatened, and caressed her by turns, promised her all the desires of her heart if she complied, and assured her of his fiercest indignation if she remained silent. But neither the arts of flattery, nor the denunciations of vengeance, nor the blandishments of gallantry, produced any effect upon her. She slighted his promises of reward, and contemned his threats of punishment. The mind of this girl, though, as our readers have seen,

she was somewhat fickle and coquettish, was not incapable of reflection. She confessed truly that the gay and lavish conduct of Stanley, when he first appeared at her father's cottage, his gallant air and handsome person, had filled her heart with something like love ; but the scenes in which she had since seen him engaged opened her eyes to his real character, and though she now could not but admire, as all uninformed minds will, the daring valour of his character, as well as the comeliness of his person, and the dashing style of his manners, and might wish that her own swain possessed those qualities, yet she was perfectly aware of and deeply dreaded the ferocity and heartless depravity of her libertine admirer. Thus disgusted with Stanley, it was no hard matter for her old sweetheart, Walter Needham, to regain her affections, and she admitted him again to her following, as the country saying is, with a secret confession, that she had behaved foolishly. Their reconciliation was induced from what passed between the outlaw and Needham, after their con-

flict for the deer slain by the former in the park, which our readers will doubtless remember; and as the outlaw then behaved with a disinterested kindness and magnanimity which Needham could not have hoped for, the woodman afterwards devoted himself to his interest, and was trusted by him with great confidence. Needham was informed, as he declared to Stanley, of the death of Ashby, and indeed with all that passed between the retainers of Sir George Vernon and Stanley, together with what occurred after the soldier's departure, when the retainers bore the corpse of the fanatic to the woodhead; and he also knew that it was Dame Ollerenshaw's intention to bury her brother beside the cottage at night, that no inquiry might arise to implicate her old patron, Sir George Vernon. At this funeral he wished to be present, indeed it was almost requisite he should, as the intended husband of Rose, and kinsman of the deceased; but it was necessary that he should provide a man to fulfil the duty of his ward whilst absent, and he could not procure one until a short time

before he was seen by Stanley and Sparrandam in the wood. He was then making all haste to the woodhead, and hearing by their voices who they were, and guessing at once, that they possessed some knowledge of what was afoot at Ollerenshaw's, and that they were in hopes of securing or slaying the outlaw, he darted, as our readers have seen, into the thicket, and by secret paths, known only to the woodman, reached the cottage. Here, through the casement, he beheld the Jesuit, whom he had seen that day at the hall, and fearful of appearing before him, he gave the moorcock's whistle, a signal which he had known the outlaw and Anak Ollerenshaw to use commonly between them. Alarmed by this note, the outlaw, who was then upon his knees engaged in prayer for the repose of him who had suffered death in his stead, sprang upon his feet, and left the cottage. At the door he met the woodman, who warned him of his danger; and a plan was devised for capturing the soldiers instead of the outlaw becoming their victim. The outlaw hastened across the park towards

Chatsworth, for the purpose of collecting such a number of his friends as would overpower any resistance that Stanley and Sparandam could make ; for it was intended to make them prisoners without doing them any bodily injury. Neither would the outlaw hold them long captive ; but he wished to shew Stanley that it was not want of force which prevented him from retaliating. Needham returned the way he came, purposing to break down the wooden bridge over the Wye, by which manœuvre he trusted to detain the soldiers so long on the other side, as to give the outlaw ample time to return with his followers. But it happened a little unfortunately that he fell in with the enemy upon the bridge itself, and, obliged to put a good face upon the matter, he made out the story which he related to Stanley, not expecting that they would force him to return with them to the woodhead. There the curses of Dame Ollerenshaw delivered him from his companions, and he lost no time in returning by short cuts to the bridge, which having passed, he broke down, and continued his walk to-

wards Haddon. At this bridge Stanley, Sparandam, and the Jesuit, the woodmen with their burden, and Rose, arrived in a short time after they had quitted the burning ruins of the cottage; and Anak, who went first, made a halt on the bank, and set down his end of the bier.

“What stop ye for now?” said Stanley, coming forward; “your strength sure does not fail with bearing this dwarf a few furlongs — onward.”

“Some one has fallen the bridge,” said Anak.

“It is that villain Needham,” said Stanley; “he has broke it down fearing pursuit. How deep is the river here? Is it passable?”

“I wot it is not now,” said Gilbert; “the freshes have been out lately.”

“Ay, but the freshes are not out now,” replied Stanley, “so one of you ford the water; and that you may not seek to escape, do you watch him Sparandam, and shoot the fellow dead, if he offers to fly.”

“Nay,” said Anak, perceiving that Stanley was resolute in pressing forward,

“ we may perhaps find the bridge. Be-like he has but flung it down, and ’twill stick by the next bank.”

“ Right, fellow !” said Stanley, “ I see thou’rt a good and staunch hound when well hunted. Try there, boy. I’ll be sworn thou wouldst rather pass the river dry-shod than with wet hose.”

Anak Ollerenshaw, as if instinctively, went to a bank where the river made a turn, and found the wooden bridge sticking among the sedges. He tried, but vainly, to draw it out of the water himself; and his father, leaving the bier, went to his assistance, accompanied by Stanley and the German, who feared the woodmen were seeking to give them the slip. The ground between the bank and the scite of the bridge was pretty clear of trees; but at one side, an avenue, apparently a principal one, entered a thicket, which probably diverged to the high road. The woodmen had scarcely raised the bridge from the water, when a shrill whistle was heard from the avenue, and instantly a herd of deer flew by, and dashing through the water took to the

wood on the opposite side. Immediately after, five or six men clad in the garb of woodmen, whom Stanley did not know, came hastily from the avenue, and stopping when they saw the soldiers, bade them surrender.

“Ho, fellows!” cried Stanley, “whom do ye take us for?”

“For right rascally stalkers o’ the deer,” answered one of them, “so down with your cap and feather, my fine fellow, and come along with us.”

“Thou art mistaken, woodman!” replied Stanley; “I am a guest of your lord’s. Stanley by name.”

“Whate’er be thy name, thou shalt go with us,” cried the fellow. “So best yield thee.”

The man approached Stanley, and endeavoured to seize him by the cloak; but the soldier, suspicious that all was not right, struck him a blow which made him reel around. Foiled in his purpose, the fellow whistled, and a band of men armed and masked, with the outlaw at their head, sprang from the thicket. Stanley, at this sight, called out, “Defend thyself, Sparandam; the villains have be-

trayed us ;” and forgetting in his hurry that his pistols were discharged, levelled them at his foes. Undismayed at the sight of his fire-arms, the outlaw rushed upon Stanley, who, being provided with no other weapon, for he had not time to draw sword or dagger, could make little resistance. Maddened with rage, he did indeed hurl his pistols at his foe, and afterwards grappled with him ; but the weapons flew harmless over his rival’s head, and so many of his followers came to his assistance, that the desperate soldier was in a short time overcome. But Sparandam was not so easily vanquished. When beset by half-a-dozen of the woodmen, he drew his pistols from his belt, and discharged them upon his assailants, three or four of whom were severely wounded by the shots, and then defended himself so fiercely with his sword, and maintained so resolute a countenance, that it seemed too hazardous an adventure to rush upon him. The outlaw, however, determined to shew Stanley that he was not deficient in mettle, gave his prisoner into the charge of several of his

followers, and with great spirit made an assault upon the German colonel. They were about equally matched in their knowledge of the sword, neither of them being able to compete with Stanley in the use of that weapon ; and although the German was considerably stouter and stronger than his antagonist, yet the outlaw was much the younger and more active. Their courage was equal ; for each fought with much less care to preserve himself than eagerness to annoy his foe. The first wound was received by Sparandam, and it sealed the fortune of his adversary, for stung with the pain, he gave up his fence, and turning his rapier into a cut and thrust, laid about him with undistinguishing rage. The outlaw was not slow in taking advantage of his unguarded impetuosity, and watching his opportunity with a coolness which his late combat with Stanley had taught him, ran his weapon through the sword arm of the German, upon which his followers secured him.

“ Fiends and tenfels ! ” cried the German, dragging the men about who had

fastened on him ; “ hell is loose to-night in this cursed wood — the witch has palsied my arm — off, dogs — I will dash ye lifeless.”

“ Nay, an ye kick thus,” said one of the men, “ we’ll shackle ye soon.”

“ Put the bear his muzzle on !” said another laughing, “ and let him dance.”

“ And if he be not farrantly,” cried a third, “ set the dogs on — they’ll tame his bearship, I’ze warrant ye.”

“ Put down the bridge, and set forward,” cried the outlaw ; “ we must lose no time.”

“ Villain !” cried Stanley, whose rage would scarcely suffer him to speak, “ whither wouldst thou convey us ?”

“ To the outlaw’s hall !” replied his rival gaily, “ beneath my own tree in the greenwood. Ye sought me, sirs, and ye have found me. We must not part soon.”

The bridge was now reinstated in its proper place, by the joint exertions of the outlaw’s followers and the woodmen ; and notwithstanding the opposition of the soldiers, they were borne across the

river, and dragged onward towards the higher part of the park. The Jesuit, who during the combat had remained unmolested by the side of the bier, followed Gilbert Ollerenshaw and his son, who raising their burden, pursued the track of the outlaw.

CHAP. XI.

Nay, then, good night to fortune !
She hath but hitherto shewed fair and friendly,
She hath but puffed us up with hollow smiles,
She hath but gilded her pernicious poison,
She hath but masked her ever-changing visage,
She hath but cloaked her form, and hid her treasons,
To dash, with one fierce stroke, our joys to hell.

PYLGRYMAGE OF GRACE.

It seemed to be fortunate for the outlaw's enterprize, that there was not only sufficient light from the moon to guide his party, and to enable them to make sure that they had captured the right men, but that the wind was so high and the night altogether so rough and boisterous, that there was no chance of the noise arising from the conflict being heard at Haddon, and consequently no fear of a rescue. But the very circumstances which appeared in the outlaw's favour, very soon proved singularly disastrous ; for his party had not advanced many roods from the bridge, before they

were encountered by a body of horse, whose approach, through the deafening yell of the wind, had not been heard. A loud cry of "the Vernon," from the outlaw's followers, proclaimed their recognition of the king of the Peak, and each man abandoning his leader, fled into the wood. The outlaw, who walked between Stanley and the German, and who scorned to be the first to fly, was immediately seized upon by his late captives, who grinned with malicious joy to see him at their mercy.

"What, ho! sir of the greenwood!" cried Stanley, "the tables are turned—we will not indeed part soon."

"Wie so!" exclaimed Sparandam, "we shall not visit your hall to-night. Marry, now am I right sore troubled that yon gallant bevy of black-faced outlaws have left ye in the lurch—thou dost fight boldly, and we should have had t'other bout."

"Ho!" cried Sir George Vernon, who, pressing through his followers, now approached Stanley, "what is the meaning of this—who are ye? Ned Stanley—

Colonel—by St. George ye are the men I came to seek—and what man have ye there in keeping?”

“His worship o’ the wood!” answered Stanley, “the right noble and gentle outlaw.”

“What! have ye that knave at last!” cried the knight; “as I live, sirs, ye have done me excellent service.”

“Not better than you have done them,” replied the outlaw boldly. “They never saw the face of the Vernon more gladly.”

“The villain set upon us with a rout of twenty armed and masqued thieves,” said Stanley, “and they took us at vantage too, or we had captured the whole gang; we were on full march to their rendezvous when ye came up, and on seeing you, the valorous followers of this romantic knight could not find heart to stand a second racket.”

“They have done wisely,” said Sir George, “and I am glad on’t. Their leader will be sufficient for an example, and he shall swing if there be a branch in Haddon Park that will bear his weight.

Some of ye look to him, and give these gentlemen your horses."

Several of the knight's followers instantly dismounted, and providing Stanley and the German with horses, released them from their charge over the outlaw, who, notwithstanding the menace of Sir George, preserved a calm and cheerful countenance. When this exchange had taken place, Sir George ordered them to return to Haddon. "But first," he continued, "saw ye the fire, Ned Stanley? It seemed nigh the woodhead: the fear that ye were in hazard brought me forth."

"As we ride I will tell you," replied Stanley, turning his horse back; "but where are ye, woodmen, Ollerenshaw, Rose, and Monsieur du Prat too? where is he?"

"Here, may it please your worships," answered Anak.

"What, thou hast not run away too?" said Stanley.

"Nay, marry, we've no place to run to," replied Gilbert.

"Some of you fellows lend horses to

the count and this wench," said Stanley, "and bring them forward: here is a new colony for Haddon, knight."

"Wherefore would ye have them there?" said Sir George.

"For reasons which I will show you hereafter are sufficient," answered Stanley; "they must not be at large."

They now returned at a sharp pace towards the hall, where they soon arrived, and the outlaw, the woodmen, and their relatives were placed in confinement for the night, being told to prepare themselves for a severe examination on the morrow.

Instead of retiring to rest, the knight of Haddon led the soldiers and the Jesuit into his parlour, where they were served with victuals and wine by their ambassador Probus, of which Stanley and Sparandam partook heartily, to supply the loss of animal stamina which their exertions had occasioned. Sir George was anxious to learn the particulars of their adventure, which, as they supped, Stanley recounted in parcels. The knight mused a good deal upon the

burning of the woodman's cottage, and said, "I care not a rial for the burning of this den of thieves, for thieves, Monsieur Comte, notwithstanding your being of kin to them, Onshaw and his son are. But it may draw the eyes of the government on us too soon, and we may perhaps be revelling at the bridal when we had need be arming for battle."

"Sooner and better," cried the German, as usual, rather elevated with his liquor; "we've been idling in our doubts and hose long enough. If we stay much longer, I shall never be able to bear steel again."

"This outlaw questionless has our secret," said Edward Stanley; "and his abettors, as you saw to-night, were not few."

"I think there is nought to be dreaded from him;" said the Jesuit, "and I would not have ye make your own fears the apology for his death. It seems to me his quarrel to Mr. Stanley hath arisen out of the untoward affair that hath happened."

"For which he deserves death," re-

plied the knight of Haddon; "and if I am to have any power in this rising, he shall suffer."

"With your worship's leave," said Doctor Probus, "I was engaged in telling you, when the fire in the wood called you off—"

"Ay, that the Spanish envoy would have us delay awhile," said Sir George. "They are not ready with their supplies."

"True," continued Probus, "and moreover, that the late surrender of Pacheco and the remains of his crew, establishing an act of aggression against king Philip, which hitherto rests unexplained, made it necessary for him to act with great caution."

"But he introduced thee to some one," said Sir George, "did he not? a courtier?"

"I'faith, sirs, he did!" answered Probus, "one Sir William Peto, a man eminently skilled in all the factions, both English and Scottish. He detailed unto me the whole history of the Pole plot that hath lately been brought to light, re-

vealed the names of many nobles and gentry that were sure to rise with us, to whom he offered to communicate our intentions, subscribed on the spot a thousand pound, which he paid down into the ambassador's hand, and bade me assure your honours that though unknown to ye, you might count upon him as a sure card in your game."

"Peto, Sir William Peto," said Stanley, "who can he be? sure no traitor."

"Traitor indeed!" cried the *Æsculapian*, with a sneering kind of smile; "the Bishop of Aquila would hardly be hand and glove with a traitor and foe of his master's interest."

"I have heard the name," said the Jesuit. "It is an ancient and honourable family of our own faith — beside, the envoy's introduction is enough, his excellency knows the men of our faction better than any man living; but what said this gentleman touching the time of our insurrection?"

"Marry, sirs," replied Probus, "he agreed with his excellency — he thought the present time too early, too fresh to

make an attempt, after the discovery of the late plot. Beside, he counselled us to mature our measures, to make alliances, wherein, as I have recounted, he tendered his services — to provide ourselves with arms and munition of war, or to await supplies from Spain — to engage men of experience as leaders and officers in our enterprize — and chief of all to lose no time in mustering and training our men — secretly withal, that they might be ready at an hour's summons."

"Mein herz — this is good counsel — here's his health, by St. Hugo," cried the German, draining his cup. "He is a fellow of enterprize and experience both, I'll be sworn."

"Did he give ye his address," said Stanley.

"No," replied the doctor, "he would have done ; but the bishop withheld him, saying he could only judge from circumstances that I was what I seemed, and it was but prudent, that we should know each other a short time before we were perfectly unreserved. But any commu-

nication may be made to him through his excellency's hands."

"Thou art horribly suspicious, Ned Stanley," said Sir George.

"I like it not," answered Stanley; "but sure Spain will not prove treacherous, and her envoy durst not play false of his own head."

"Donner! what mean ye?" said Sparradam, with some indignation; "I wear Philip's livery — no, begging pardon, our good knight's at present — but I am king Philip's soldier, with an eye to my own advantage first, and I receive his pay."

"When thou canst get it," said Stanley."

"Right!" pursued the German with great gravity; "true, for a dealer in gold and silver, the Spaniard's a ~~d~~ bad paymaster; but nevertheless, in my company, let him be spoken of reverently, or ye shall hear of it, by St. Hugo."

"Nay, if thou say'st it in thy cups," said Stanley, "I know thou'rt infallible — thou would'st swear that Philip is

worthy of the sainthood rather than miss a broken pate."

"Why, thou three-visaged gudgeon!" exclaimed the German in a great passion; "thou two-suited spendthrift! dost mean to say that I'm quarrelsome? Drunk or sober, is there any man of thine acquaintance less given to bully and swagger than I am?"

"Thou indeed!" cried Stanley, "thou art the veriest king Cole I ever met withal, after two hours drinking."

"King Cole or king fiend," exclaimed Sparandam, "I know neither — but by this dagger at my girdle ——"

"Peace, sirs," cried the knight of Haddon, who was not in the humour for pursuing this drunken squabble. "We have matters of weight under counsel. Let this dispute have the opportunity of an idler hour."

Stanley perceived that Sir George was serious, and became immediately grave, while Sparandam, with a shake of the head, fell back in his chair and was silent. The knight continued; "If, as the Spanish envoy doth think best, we postpone

our insurrection, what is to be done, if Ollerenshaw's affair become a subject of inquiry? and how am I to answer this outlaw's detention, which, as his followers have escaped, will questionless be complained of?"

"Rest easy for Ollerenshaw," replied Stanley; "his wife governs him, I'll be sworn, and the father here can as he lists sway the dame — they may easily be won. For the outlaw, he has been seen to drive your deer, and he may legally, I take it, be held captive, until he can be properly examined; at least unless, as I fear, he prove some man of rank; in that case, we must act as the exigency demands."

"Wherefore do ye judge he is of quality?" said the knight.

"I value him by his free air, his gay manners, and his gallant bearing," answered Stanley; "they are qualities not easily gained by men of low birth. His courage, as Sparandam can tell ye, is of the right mettle."

"And why not yourself, Ned Stanley," cried the German, starting up from

his recumbent posture ; “ he made you captive as well as me.”

“ Ay, with the help of half a score ruffians,” answered Stanley ; “ but he vanquished thee with his single sword — I would have bartered my fortune to have had thy chance.”

“ I am no swordsman,” said Sparandam ; “ I do not understand the quillets of your fence. Set a man before me with a plain bilboa, and I will fight him as long as thou or any man of thy race.”

“ I know thou wouldst belabour the devil, Sparandam,” said Stanley, desirous of allaying the German’s vexation ; “ but thy defeat will caution thee, I hope, to be more observant of the new fashions. Thou shalt get up a-mornings some two hours earlier than thou art wont, and I will bestow some of my skill in swordsmanship on thee. I’faith, an thou wilt be at the pains, I will teach thee to carve the bodies of the untutored after the rules of anatomy.”

“ Not I, marry,” replied the German ; “ I am too stiff i’the joints to learn your stoccadoes and passados, which are use-

less in plain battle or on horseback. They're well enough for such young brawlers as thyself, that care not a marvedi for your lives ; but heaven be praised, I'm now come to years of discretion."

"Not in thy cups," said Stanley, "if thou art in thy choler — and he that knows thee, will hardly believe thou art discreet in any thing."

"Why, gramercy, lad !" cried Sparandam, "thou dost give the duchess and the regency credit for wisdom with a vengeance."

"Then do I give them credit for all they deserve," said Stanley ; "they are much richer in wisdom than honesty."

"A truce, gentlemen," said the knight of Haddon, who perceived this kind of conversation might produce ill effects, "a truce to this subject. — Let the duchess and the regency rest in peace, until we understand them better."

"And if we were all to seek repose," said the Jesuit, "I think we should make use of our discretion."

All the company, with the exception of Sparandam, who demurred as usual to

quit his cup, acquiesced in the Jesuit's hint, and they immediately broke up and sought their chambers, the German being obliged to accompany them.

All the inhabitants of Haddon were stirring betimes the following morning. The news that the famous outlaw was taken, and brought to the hall, were soon spread among the domestics, and, through the waiting-women, reached the ears of the unfortunate Dorothy before she arose. These tidings overwhelmed her with grief. Whilst her lover was free, she thought little of her own confinement, and had still hopes that they were not to be separated for ever; but she knew so well the fiery disposition of her father, and dreaded so much the depraved and unrelenting spirit of Edward Stanley, that the capture of the outlaw appeared almost the seal of his fate. She threw her arms round the neck of her sister, with whom she had slept since the discovery of her amour, and fell upon her breast choked with sorrow.

“ Dorothy, sister, sweet wench !” cried Margaret, dreading that her sister would

expire in her arms, "for the love of heaven, give not way to this rage of grief. Believe not, that a finger of thy love shall come by harm. — Nay, Doll, for my sake — thou wilt break my heart."

"Oh, he is dead already!" exclaimed Dorothy, raising her head, from which her eyes seemed bursting with grief; "he is in hands as ruthless as the rock; he will — he will be murdered — oh, sweet sister! what must be done to save him?"

"Be thou more easy," answered Margaret, "and I promise thee he shall not die unless we all die with him. I will see Thomas Stanley — he shall know the history of your loves; he will not stand by, and see a noble gentleman slain."

"Oh! prithee send to Saint Lo," cried Dorothy, "he would have flattered me with some means of an escape. But let me die, so my heart's love be rescued; let me for ever be prisoner, if my sweet John be freed. If thou mightest speak to Needham the keeper, Saint Lo assured me he was trusty."

"I will not fail thee," replied her sister, with great affection; "I will use all

means, as if this fatal cloud hung over myself."

"Ha, thou art my better angel!" cried Dorothy, clasping her in her arms, "thou art thrice my sister. How should I fail without thy aid! blessed be heaven for the bold spirit thou art graced withal."

"Nay, dear Doll," returned Margaret with a smile, "thou shalt witness some of my valiance before thy love shall suffer wrong. I will arm me in our father's corslet, and fight manfully by his side. He shall not lack rescue, if I can wield sword or partisan."

"Ha! thou dost strive to cheer me," returned Dorothy, with a faint smile; "but thy sun-like humour hath to melt the ice of my fears, which is thick indeed. Bethink thee, Margaret, it is not the open violence of our father that I have to dread alone, and that is fearful enough to think upon, but the treachery, the secret practice of Stanley, who hath no soul, no conscience, no humanity, no remorse—oh, sooner would I trust a babe within the paws of a bear, than my dear heart within the reach of his rival's dagger."

“ I prithee, sweet sister, do not aggravate thy sorrow !” answered Margaret, “ of little trust is the man thou dost fear ; but he durst not for his life soil the walls of Haddon by playing the assassin. Our father is violent, but not murtherous — he might strike with the sword, but he would not stab with the dagger.”

“ Heaven forbid, I should think he would !” cried Dorothy, “ but thou knowest what sway this traitor hath over him. Hath he not led him into disloyalty ? He cannot move a step further without incurring the guilt of blood.”

“ Yes, but artful as Edward Stanley is, and fierce and resolute as he has shewn himself,” said Margaret, “ I have for a time clogged the wheels of his treason, and trust me, I know a hinge — what it is I dare not reveal even to thee — whereon thy lover’s safety shall turn securely. I’faith it is a desperate measure ; my breath nigh fails, when I ponder my own spirit ; but I will not fail thee, dear Dorothy, until life fails me.”

Whilst she was yet speaking, one of their women entered the chamber, and informed them, that Sir George Vernon

had commanded that they should remain in the Lady Margaret's apartments, and, that he might ensure obedience to his will, had actually locked the outer door of the suite of rooms occupied by Margaret, and carried away the key. This was a new subject of tribulation to the sisters, not only as it prevented their personal intercession for the prisoner, but also as it portended some evil intention towards him on the part of Sir George, of which he was unwilling his daughters should be witnesses.

“What is to be done now?” said the ill-fated Dorothy, regarding her sister with a glance of unutterable despair; “what will now become of him? Ah, my stricken hart, thou art sorely beset.”

“Have patience, sweet sister,” answered Margaret. “The window is not so high, but we can speak to Thomas Stanley if he stand in the court. He must now act for us, and as he is bold and faithful, shall his love be fortunate — Good Luce, reach out my tablets. I shall be dressed ere it be ready.”

The waiting-woman soon procured writing materials, which, indeed, being very frequently used by Dorothy Vernon in her studies, were kept in the chamber, and Margaret sat down to address an epistle to her lover, which she wrote in much less time than her more learned sister would have taken to consider the first sentence. The letter was brief enough, but sufficiently to the purpose, and ran thus, as she read it over to her sister.

“The outlaw is taken, his life is menaced, and there is little to hope from the mercy or justice of his enemies. To thee do Dorothy and I confide his safety. He is of noble blood, though it may be he will not confess it, and his death, which would soon reach her highness’ ears through a channel that is not suspected, would draw ruin, sure and instant, upon all that are concerned in his miscarriage. Use all thy wit and courage in his defence, and bring us news of thy success, if thou wouldst ever see me smile on thee again.”

Having concluded, she hastily folded up the billet, and bade her attendant to go to the outer door, and desire some of

the domestics to send Sir Thomas Stanley into the inner court.

“Ha, I fear,” said Dorothy, “good Sir Thomas is too mild and peaceable, too easily prevailed on to cope with such bold and subtle men.”

“Thou knowst him not, dear Dorothy,” answered Margaret; “he is a true Stanley, as dauntless and mettlesome as any of his race, else would I not match my hand with his. On my honour, I know not a man to whose protection I would sooner trust my life.”

She threw open the casement, and the knight immediately came forth from the hall, and stood beneath the window.

“Good morrow, sweet Margaret,” said Sir Thomas; “I marvel the fairy hath not pricked thy finger for lying so long a-bed.”

“We are prisoners,” replied Margaret, hastily; “I fear to speak with thee long; read this billet, and take a turn or two in the garden; if no one observes thee, come again.”

She threw down the letter, which the knight picked up and put into his pocket.

She then closed the window, and he withdrew to the garden.

“Think ye he will assist us?” said the timid Dorothy.

“Oh, do not doubt him,” answered Margaret; “were his place filled by thy bold outlaw, and he in durance, my hope would not be better. Come, wench, arouse thee. Thou art not wont to be so low in spirit.”

“Nor should I, if he were free,” replied Dorothy. “But my soul is fettered with his body. I have lost all heart and courage.”

“Not all, I warrant thee,” returned Margaret. “Let us get this day over, and to-morrow brings Earl Derby to Haddon. He, be sure on’t, will not see thy love suffer wrong. And in him too, is my trust to quash this spirit of disloyalty, to unmask his subtle and dangerous son, and to punish his hypocrisy. Would the day were spent.”

“Ah, I see thou dost doubt Sir Thomas Stanley’s power,” cried Dorothy; “thou dost fear, despite thy looks, that his mediation may fail.”

“ I do not, truly, dear sister,” answered Margaret. “ But I fear his mediation may arouse the fierce devil in his brother’s breast. The presence of Earl Derby would impose a calm on all ; the countenance of that noble peer, his age and dignity, could not be viewed by the worst of traitors without awe and respect.”

A pebble thrown against the window announced the return of Sir Thomas Stanley, and Margaret again opened the casement.

“ Well, hast thou read my billet ?” said Margaret, “ and durst thou undertake the atchievement ?”

“ Thou art but playful, fair love,” replied the knight with a smile, “ when thou dost question my courage. There is nought to fear ; but come what may, dear Margaret, thou shalt not see my face while the gentleman is in danger. I pledge ye my honour for his safety, at least while I can wield weapon in his defence. I knew not he was so well known to ye as your epistle hints he is ; but I had already resolved he should meet no illegal violence.”

“ But where is the outlaw ?” said Margaret.

“ At present confined in the high tower,” answered Stanley ; “ but he is forthwith to be brought down for question to the hall.”

“ Would it be prudent to send to Saint Lo ?” said Margaret, “ he knows him well.”

“ Fair Margaret, no,” replied her lover ; “ for my brother will then turn what is now a private aggression, I mean the outlaw’s peregrination of these woods, into a political injury. He will call the noble and gallant woodman a treacherous spy, and this may so enrage Sir George as to force him into rebellion, and he will hang up our ward to despite the opposite faction. No, unless all other means fail, let Saint Lo be kept at distance. Trust me, he shall not lightly come by wrong. But prithee, who is this Robin Hood ? May not one know his name ?”

“ I may not tell it thee,” replied Margaret ; “ I am bound, and so is Dorothy, as fast as our sacred words have power, to conceal him, until we have his licence

to be more open. He is of noble blood ; as noble, dear Stanley, as thine own ; but difference of sect and ancient feud mar all cordiality between our houses. If thou wouldst save our house from ruin, save this youth from danger."

" I will hold him as dear to my heart as my own brother," answered Stanley.

" Ha ! hold him, I pray thee, dearer than does thy brother Edward," said the maiden, " or his life is not worth a bracken-sprig."

" Fear nought from Ned Stanley," replied her lover ; " he shall do as ye would have him."

" He shall, or rue his opposition," answered Margaret. " But away to the hall, lest they be hasty. Come back with joyful news."

" Or I will never come back," replied Sir Thomas.

He kissed Margaret's note, which he still held in his hand, and after she had closed the window, returned to the hall.

CHAP. XII.

Vengeance,
Sweet vengeance, calls.

THE BROTHERS.

SIR Thomas Stanley, on his re-entering the hall, found the knight of Haddon seated in the midst of his domestics and retainers, and more immediately surrounded by his brother Edward, the German colonel, the Jesuit, Sir Simon Degge, and the Galenical ambassador Probus. Most of these had been summoned by Sir George, but some were drawn thither by curiosity, or by the anxiety which any one within the precincts of Haddon naturally must feel to know the issue of so novel and interesting a scene as was about to take place. At the moment Sir Thomas Stanley entered, the hall was in deep silence. The lord of Haddon was

delivering to his assembled retainers and friends his reasons for dooming the outlaw to death, which he seemed resolutely bent should be his fate.

“Hath not this burglar done me wrong?” said Sir George, with great vehemence. “Hath he not despited me to my teeth, destroyed my deer, and lorded it over my keepers, as well as planned the robbery of that which is dearer to me than my life, my daughter, and of that which is dearer still, my honour and reputation. Ye will say, is he not punishable by the laws of the forest? No, friends; it is said this thief, this poacher i’ the dark, is a man of blood and quality. May I put him to the common forms of justice? he will slip through her fingers like an eel. Yes, loving friends and kinsmen, this suborner of my house, this robber of my fame, will ’scape my vengeance and openly laugh me to scorn.”

A murmur of approbation, began by Edward Stanley, buzzed through the hall.

“I see,” continued the knight, “ye have too much love for my house, too

dear affection for the fame of my fathers, to bid me sit down with this indignity. If the law will not burnish my soiled honour, wherefore, kinsmen, should not I, when I have the means, scour away the defilement in the blood of my foe? Shall my reputation rest on quilllets and chicanery? Shall I dance attendance on the courts, when I wear a sword, and can right myself? Shall I stoop to beg and to pay for that which I can take for nothing? Shall I make another man the arbiter of my fame and shame, when I can be my own judge, and write the record in the memory of my own countrymen, my kinsmen and my friends? Never shall this be till the glory of the Vernon be veiled in the dust—never, till the name be worthless, worthless as this base outlaw.”

The knight paused again, and pulled his hat over his brow. His eyes lightened with indignation; and he frequently grasped the hilt of his dagger, as if to indicate more plainly his remorseless resolution. The spirit of his retainers and domestics, so humanely exerted at Stanley’s murder

of the fanatic Ashby, now hardened under the furious harangue of their lord, and seemed as vindictive as his own. This spirit was no little excited by the vengeful groans and gestures of Edward Stanley, Sparandam, and Probus, who acted the part of Cyclops to keep the fire alive when Vulcan the great was tired of blowing.

“ If this foul traitor deserved not his doom,” continued Sir George, “ I would not bring his blood on my head for the worth of England. But ye know that he hath been the cause of innocent blood being shed ; nay, since this devil hath haunted our country, the time hath teemed with mischances. He hath braved all ventures, and now must bide his doom. Bring him forth.”

“ Ay, sirs,” cried the knight of Bowdon, who had hitherto heard what passed in fearful silence, “ bring him forth, and let him make answer for himself. By Magna Charta every free man hath a right to defend himself — nullus liber homo —”

“ Peace, fool,” cried Stanley, jerking

Sir Simon rudely with his elbow ; “ talk thy jargon where it is better counted than among swordsmen.”

“ Nay, truly,” answered the knight, clapping his hand to his side, “ thou hadst no need to accompany thine exhortation with so rude a punch ; marry, I have not, it is like, well comprehended all that his honour, Sir George, hath delivered ; but it seemed to me that he would —”

“ Relieve you justices o’the peace from the trouble of examining this outlaw,” said Doctor Probus. “ He would give him the coup de grace without troubling her highness’ justices to pass sentence — hang him up in the greenwood.”

“ What, without trial per pares ?” said Sir Simon, in amazement.

“ You have heard,” replied Probus.

“ Nay then, though my soul doth quake within my body,” said the knight of Bowdon, becoming as pale as a sheet, “ I must protest, it will be a murther both in law and conscience. We shall all be principals too. I will not behold the deed. Sir George Vernon ! good Sir George !”

“Hol ! thy craven throat,” cried Stanley, with great fierceness, “or I will cram my gloved fist into it, as I would choke a bear. Desist, traitor, on thy life.”

“I will not i’faith,” replied the timid Sir Simon; “I will protest—Sir George Vernon, as thou art good knight and true, turn hitherward thy regards.”

“Well, sir, what now?” replied the knight of Haddon; “what stirs up thy mettle?”

“Adad, sir, I have reason,” said Sir Simon; “I am told the argument of your speeches hath been your intention to judge this outlaw of your own hand—resolve me, I pray ye, if this be sooth.”

“Yea, sir, I mean no less,” answered Sir George.

“Trust me then, I hope you will do less than you mean,” returned Sir Simon, “for you will commit a murther, and you will be liable to the pains and penalties of murther, and all consorting with and abetting you will be amenable for the misfeazance, if you do execution on this man. Nevertheless, I speak wrong, in saying execution, for there may be no

execution without judgment, and no judgment, save by a legal judge ; a sentence, *coram non judice*, is no judgment at all ; as well might old Charon have usurped the office of Rhadamanthus."

" A pestilence on thy tongue," cried Stanley.

" Aye, and a plague on thine," returned Degge, who deemed he was safe in so large an audience ; " I tell'ye again, ye act neither legally nor wisely in this business. Take it as ye list, *nunquam aliud lex, aliud sapientia dixit*. I can bring ye authorities withal, cogent and awful authorities."

" They must be more awful than thine own," said Stanley with a sneer, " or they will profit little."

" What ?" said the knight.

" Your countenances o' the law," returned Stanley, " which to such daw-hearted knaves as thyself, have the horrid front of lions ; but to men of spirit, to soldiers, they shew in their true aspect, the ugly and impotent night-mare, which, with a shrug o' the shoulders, is sent packing."

“ Yea, marry,” said the knight of Bowdon, “ but ye will find the law to be more than a bugbear in the end.”

“ Let the end care for itself,” replied Stanley ; “ we are yet in the beginning.”

“ I pray you, master Edward Stanley,” continued Sir Simon, “ had not you the chastisement, as you gentlemen o’ the sword word it, of this outlaw ? It was said, he was wounded by your rapier.”

“ What of that ?” said Stanley.

“ Marry, sir, is it no punishment to be cut and slashed into as many pieces as there are in a court doublet ?” cried the knight ; “ and know ye not that *nemo bis puniri debet pro eodem delicto* ?”

“ Nay, i’faith,” returned Probus, “ it is a maxim of the civil law, *boni judicis est ampliare jurisdictionem*. It is the property of a good judge to amplify, to extend, to increase his jurisdiction ; better to reiterate his judgment, to see it doubly executed, than it should fail altogether. But here comes the delinquent.”

Attended by a guard of Sir George Vernon’s domestics, the outlaw now en-

tered the hall, and as he was brought in front of the knight of Haddon, Sir Thomas Stanley pressed through the crowd, and took his station beside his intended father-in-law. Sir George surveyed the handsome and careless countenance of the outlaw with a fierce and angry scowl, which betokened him no good, and the mood of Edward Stanley, Sparandam, and some of the other friends of the Vernon, would have afforded him little comfort, if he had been inclined to seek it in their regards. But his eye wandered freely over the assembly, and his spirit was not checked at the sight of his enemies' rancour. He stood as firm and as calm before the proud King of the Peak, as Mutius Scævola before the tyrant of Hetruria. But with this undaunted spirit, no jot of insolence was mingled. He was soberly brave, not contemptuously hardy ; and rather seemed disposed to pay to Sir George Vernon the respect that was due to his rank and his age, than to dare him to further mischief by an open disregard of his power. All the domestics, indeed all present, pressed as

nigh to him as possible, that they might have a close view of the man that had made Haddon woods so famous; and as he unbonnetted on taking his station before Sir George, a murmur of admiration at the manly beauty of his features, ran through the hall. Even the eye of the Vernon appeared to relax somewhat of its ferocity, as he gazed on the ingenuous and noble countenance of his foe, and Sir Thomas Stanley was his friend before a word had dropped from him.

“ A proper man, i’faith,” said Sir Simon Degge, whispering to the Jesuit, who looked upon the outlaw with much concern; “ a right handsome gallant. Marry, ’tis no marvel what hath happened. The Lady Dorothy, I’ll be caution, is not the only woman that hath thrown soft looks upon him; and he seems as bold withal as master Stanley. Well, I say Sir George will answer it if he does him wrong.”

“ Is the outlaw disarmed?” said Probus, wishing to ingratiate himself with his patron by an eager severity towards his

prisoner ; “ I thought I spied a dagger beneath his cloak.”

“ Search him,” said Sir George, “ not that we fear him, but a felon has no title to bear honourable weapons.”

“ A felon,” exclaimed the outlaw, while deep blushes covered his cheeks ; “ Sir George Vernon you are an ancient man, and I have reason to hold you respectfully, else by the worth of my honour—”

“ What dost rate it at ?” said Edward Stanley, with a sneer ; “ if thou wert to turn it adrift, I trow there are few that would give it harbour. A thief’s honour indeed ; nay, sir outlaw, an ye will, bite your lips off. I say thief, robber, jack o’ the dark, cut-purse, and draw-latch, thou art all of these and each in particular.”

“ Ned Stanley !” said his brother, plucking him by the sleeve, “ cease thy railing. Thou doest neither shew thy blood nor courage in thus using thy tongue like a bully or a bawd.”

“ Tush !” cried Edward impatiently, “ I marvel Sir George forgot to lock

thee up with the women, so should we have been spared a pestilent overflow of gall, and a villanous assortment of ill names — get thee gone.”

“How, sirrah? you forget yourself,” said his brother.

“No; I am well advised how I speak,” replied the traitor, “tempt me no farther; out of my sight.”

He spoke in a low tone, but so fiercely, that Sir Thomas was for some moments struck dumb with astonishment.

“Brother as thou art,” at length replied Sir Thomas, with a groan which the libertine’s unkindness drew from him, “thou shalt answer me for this.”

“Thou shalt answer me,” said Edward Stanley. “If I had not feared the sight of a sword would quail thy silken courage, I had sought thee long ago — thou art my father’s son, tempt not my mood.”

“To me thy mood has little danger,” said Sir Thomas.

“’Tis well for thee then,” answered his brother; “but if thou wouldst not that my angry words should mean somewhat fatal to thee or me, keep thyself

clear of what is about to follow. Do thou step in between the knight's anger and this outlaw's life, and thine own shall pay his forfeit."

"Thou shalt see what I will do anon," replied Sir Thomas.

While this fearful dialogue passed between these brothers, the outlaw was deprived of his cloak and dagger, which indeed, he gave up without resistance; and Sir George waving his hand for silence, said "Were I to do even justice, I should hang thee up on the next tree; for thou hast been caught in the very act of thy trespass — nay, I myself have seen thee and heard thee do that, which to most men would be an ample apology for taking thy life. Hear'st thou me, sirrah."

"I hear, sir knight," replied the outlaw.

"Well, what hast thou to say in thy defence?" said Sir George, "what apology for having abused my house, and stained my honour?"

"Sir, I have done neither," replied the outlaw. "That I have loved — that

I do love your daughter, I would not deny though the confession itself brought me death. I protest that the reputation of your house is as sacred to me as my own life. Had it not been unstained, I had not sought the love of your daughter. Both her honour and your's, for me, are as pure as heaven."

"For thee, Sir Vanity," cried Sir George, "and who art thou? What man of note whose love would be no dishonour to the Vernon's daughter."

The outlaw remained mute.

"As I live," continued the knight of Haddon, "thou art a false dissembler — a pretender to that thou art not. If thou wouldst convince me that thou art not a cheat, a bold and saucy pilferer and vagabond — if thou wouldst save thine own life, declare openly thy name and quality."

He paused, but the outlaw did not speak.

"What, knave," continued Sir George, "not a lie ready."

"A lie!" exclaimed the outlaw, burning with passion.

“ A lie, ay !” continued the knight of Haddon, “ do not hold it strange. I say a lie — thou hast spent thy wit, and thou canst not coin so readily as is necessary. Villain, have not thy associates been liars ever ? thieves and reprobates, dogs of plunder, wolves hungry and savage ? Thou hast a person truly from which one would expect better things ; but it is not the first time that a low-born rascal has been cased in a comely carcase.”

“ Before high heaven,” cried the outlaw, laying his hand upon his breast, “ I am none of those characters your bounty hath lavished on me. What I am, and who I am, will I not tell to any here ; but he that in this presence says I am beneath him, lies.”

“ So shalt not thou for this fortnight,” cried Sir George, mightily enraged at his bold bearing, “ so long shalt thou whistle in the wind. Lay hands on him.”

“ Nay, stand off, what would ye ?” said the outlaw, looking round him with a determination of countenance that awed the followers of the Vernon.

“ Seize him,” cried Sir George, “ and

hang him on one of the trees opposite the window where he talked with his mistress."

"By my life, not so," cried the outlaw, striking down the man nearest him, and seizing hold of Sir Simon Degge who stood next, and whose sword he disengaged from the scabbard in a moment, though the owner had lately endeavoured to draw it without effect.

"Murder, murder!" cried Sir Simon, who feared he was about to fall a prey to the rage of the outlaw, "I am none of your foe, sir outlaw — unloose me — pray ye, unhand me."

"Now let any man advance upon me," cried the outlaw fiercely throwing on his hat, and brandishing the heavy sword of Sir Simon around his head, "and I will cut him shoulder from shoulder."

As he uttered this threat, which all present seemed to respect, Edward Stanley with great coolness drew a pistol from his belt, and levelled it at the breast of his rival; but before he could discharge it, Sir Thomas Stanley grasped the weapon, and though he failed to

wring it from the hand of his brother, he held it so much aloof, that if it had gone off, the ball would not have taken effect.

“Do him no wrong,” cried Sir Thomas aloud; “I will be engaged for him, he is of noble blood.”

“Son Stanley!” cried Sir George Vernon, “thou didst not know this fellow but lately; thou canst have no better knowledge now.”

“I can, I have,” answered Sir Thomas, “I pledge ye my knightly word, that he is what I say — of noble birth — of a race that will work woe upon that hand that scathes him.”

“Be it on mine,” cried his brother, struggling to free himself; “loose thy hold Tom Stanley! he shall die.”

“He shall not die,” replied Sir Thomas, “wherefore should he? His lineage doth give him pretension to the hand of my fair sister, and Sir George’s fancied dishonour is done away — I will engage for him, he shall wed the fair Dorothy within this hour.”

“False villain!” cried Edward, gnash-

ing his teeth, "thou would'st cheat thine own brother of his love and right. Noble Vernon ! there is a conspiracy against us, and this brother of mine — brother no longer — is leagued with this felonious thief against our party. You that love the Vernon, our holy faith and me, draw out your weapons, and down with these traitors."

At these words, Sparandam, Probus, and some others among the retainers of Sir George drew their swords, whilst Stanley, finding he could not extricate his pistol from the grasp of his brother, abandoned it to his hand and bared his rapier. Sir Thomas instantly availed himself of the weapon he had acquired, and springing towards the outlaw, he exclaimed aloud —

" I have said I will guard this gentleman's life — you that regard your own keep aloof from this weapon ; for by my honour, the first man that levels a blow at the outlaw's head, shall have its contents in his breast."

This threat, and the valiant countenance of the outlaw himself, caused a pause among the assailants, and Sir George

Vernon, unwilling that his hall should become a scene of blood, called for silence. "Hold, and put by your weapons. Will ye turn this house into a den of thieves? Ned Stanley, and you of my party, put up, or ye are no longer friends of mine. Let my own servants secure this royster."

"Nay, on my life," cried Edward Stanley; "he is my own foe, and I will assault these twain traitors, if there be no one will second me."

"I fear me, Ned Stanley," cried his brother, "thou art the vilest traitor here — give back, sirrah! I will not spare thee, though thou art my own blood — advance not a foot — thou art hardly fit to die."

"I say desist, Ned Stanley, or thou art my foe?" cried Sir George; "for shame, are ye in the wood? Is this my hall that ye riot in, as if it were the common room of a brothel? We came here to do judgment gravely, not to engage in a rout and skirmish."

"Let them go forth of the house," cried Edward Stanley, whose passion was

nigh irrepressible, “and meet me point to point on the sward — both of ’em — come rascals, brace on your valour for once and turn out — I will teach ye a measure without music — I will lesson ye in the sink-a-pace — out dogs — curs — scoundrels that ye are.”

“Fie! master Edward Stanley,” cried Sir Simon, “for shame, master Edward Stanley! Your own brother, sir, a dog, a cur.”

“A fool, a knave, a wretch of thy mettle,” cried the outrageous soldier, striking him repeatedly with his fist; “an utter cast-away from the blood of his race. A traitor that, for he knows not what, will herd with the foes of his kindred — will bare weapon against his own blood.”

“Heaven forbid I should soil the honourable name I bear,” replied his brother with great calmness. “No; rather will I stand against those of my blood that would do so. I will not see murder wrought on an innocent man — that he is so I dare avouch.”

“That he is as false as thou art,”

cried Edward Stanley, "and thou as false as ~~hell~~, I dare avouch and will to the world."

"I prithee peace," said Sir George Vernon. "Now, Sir Thomas Stanley, what proof of this man's nobility have you? Who is he?"

"I pray ye, sir knight," cried the outlaw, who conjectured that Sir Thomas possessed the whole of his secret, "betray me not---as you love your own honour, and heaven knows you have full dearly proved it, shew that regard for mine with which you have respected that which is of much less moment, my life. — I cannot — I will not survive the shame of being blazoned abroad with the lies of the vulgar added to my tale; let them hear of the outlaw of Haddon, but let my true name remain unknown."

"Would I knew thy name," cried Edward Stanley, "I would have thy romance printed with the story of Troy's siege, that thy adventures might lie on every stall."

"I cannot betray that which I do not

know," said Sir Thomas Stanley; "til this hour I never saw this gentleman; and his name and lineage are as strange to me as you."

"How, son Stanley," said Sir George Vernon. "Said'st thou not he was noble — of a high and potent race?"

"And so he is," answered Sir Thomas, "I am assured of it by one that is infallible."

"Perchance by his fair mistress," said his brother with a sneer.

"It was not the Lady Dorothy that gave me this assurance," answered Sir Thomas; "though if she had, her word had been sufficient. But I beseech you, Sir George, let your decision upon the wrong you count yourself to have suffered from this gentleman, abide the assistance and counsel of Earl Derby, who will be here to-day. Let him go back to his prison with your honourable word for his safety, and there await the judgment you shall jointly come to."

"I must know more of him," replied

Sir George, anxiously fixing his eyes upon the outlaw; "wherefore, if thou art indeed a gentleman, cam'st thou not to woo my daughter, as a gentleman should, in fair and open day? Why seek her clandestinely, if thy means and intentions were honourable?"

"For one reason which you know," answered the outlaw, "which you overheard in the last converse I had with your lovely daughter — which your own word — a word never to be forgotten, sealed and ratified — the difference of our faith."

"Ha! true indeed," returned the knight; "thou art a heretic."

"Ay, and a spy to boot," said Stanley, "or my word's nought."

"I'faith," said Probus, surveying the outlaw narrowly, "I seem to have some floating recollection of having seen this man as a clerk in the chancery."

"Belie him not, sirrah," cried Sir George, "I have sufficient quarrel against him. He bears himself unlike a pinner of suits. Art thou a good queen's man?"

“ Ay, sir, her faithful subject,” answered the outlaw boldly.

“ Thou knowest, I’ll be sworn,” continued Sir George, “ that there are some here who love her not.”

“ I will not so much belie myself as to deny my experience,” replied the outlaw; “ you have now done what you scarce would answer to the law, if I should incline to question ye.”

“ And wouldst thou so, if free?” said the knight of Haddon.

“ The courtesy you have shewn me is not so great as to beget much forbearance,” said the outlaw; “ but you are the father of her who holds my heart in her hand; you are safe from my revenge.”

“ Why thou hast spoken as a noble and a valiant youth,” returned Sir George, “ and thy frankness hath gained thee liberty. Go, sir outlaw; thou art free — my honour is healed by having thy life in my hands; and I will not so stain the name I bear, nor the house of my fathers, as to smirch either with thy

blood. Go, thou shalt be in my ward of safety till thou art free of Haddon Park."

"You will not indeed give him freedom," said Edward Stanley; "at least not now."

"Indeed, son, I will, and now, forthwith — he is free already — my word is past," said Sir George.

"This is very whim and maggot i'the brain," said his fierce confederate.

"Be it so, Ned," answered the knight, "but so it must be."

"Good father, you have done nobly," said Sir Thomas Stanley.

"Mine honourable friend," cried Sir Simon, "you have acted with praiseworthy forbearance, with a christian-like forgetfulness of injuries."

"Refresh thyself, sir outlaw," said the knight of Haddon, "and then make the best of thy way. Some of ye attend him to Bakewell."

The outlaw bowed, and being furnished with his cloak and weapons, quitted the hall. As he crossed the court, he

cast up his eyes to a window where he saw Dorothy and Margaret Vernon, and kissed his hand towards them. Margaret, who little expected to see him free, uttered a cry of delight; but Dorothy fell senseless with joy into the arms of her sister.

CHAP. XIII.

Ay, but I fain would see thee snatch a bone
From out the mouth of an impatient cur,
Whose hungry belly barks for provender.
Mark, how he'll growl and snap at thee, and wake
The peaceable welkin to regain his morsel.

THE CURATE OF ROSEBERRY.

EDWARD STANLEY beheld the departure of his rival with throes of savage indignation, for he had fully concluded that when Sir George had got him into his power, he would have fulfilled those threats which he had vented against the outlaw in the heat of his anger. With Stanley himself to threaten was to act. He had never the grace to recant a meditated evil purpose, but what he doomed he executed. The nature of Sir George Vernon, however, was very different. He threatened vehemently, and in the hurry of his wrath frequently committed actions which his sober reason deplored, but he was never known to be advisedly

cruel, to do an act of inhumanity or injustice when he had time for reflection and counsel. Thus it happened that the knight of Haddon, whose resolution on the preceding night was fixed for the destruction of the outlaw, became somewhat less rigorous after his night's repose, and although in addressing his friends and retainers he had insisted strongly on his right to punish the invader of his honour with death, yet at the very time he was so sensible of the futility of his arguments, that he gradually abandoned his determination, and the end of his convictions was the liberation of the outlaw. We will not assert that he was not in some measure swayed to this act of generosity, for generosity in a man of his fiery nature it certainly was, by being assured of his prisoner's quality; nay, though a man little gifted with the foresight of a politician, he might expect to gain a proselyte or avert a foe by this measure; but whether it was the result of a political manœuvre, or the offspring of a better feeling, it is certain that it gave indescribable disgust

to Stanley. The fierce soldier, nevertheless, said little, though his countenance betrayed the rage of his heart; and at length throwing his sword behind him, he darted towards the door in great haste.

“Now, Ned Stanley,” cried Sir George, “whither away?”

“I am hot,” answered he sullenly; “I must cool myself with a few turns in the park.”

“Go,” returned the knight with more than usual seriousness; “but thou shalt first give me thine honourable word not to cross weapon with the man that has left us.”

“Why should I not?” said Stanley insolently. “If you pardon him his injury to your house, I will revenge the insult he hath wrought on my wife’s honour.”

“Thy wife!” said the knight in astonishment, “as yet she is my daughter, and no wife of thine.”

“Not mine!” cried Stanley furiously. “Think again sir knight, for your honour’s sake, not mine?”

“ I say not thine,” answered Sir George, whose blood began to warm at the imperiousness of his guest, “ and never shall be, unless thou art better ruled.”

“ Not mine !” reiterated Stanley. “ Bear witness Sparandam and you du Prat, did not this man —”

“ Villain !” cried Sir George, enraged at his plainness.

“ No villain of thine,” cried Stanley, “ I tell thee thou’rt dishonoured.”

“ Away, boy, or thou wilt move me,” cried Sir George, turning his back upon him.

“ Nay, sir, I will be heard,” cried Stanley, “ though thou chafe thy beard off. I say, you comrades bear witness if this knight did not give into my hands his daughter Dorothy, disclaiming all further right to her, making over to me, as her lord and husband, all claim to her affection and obedience.”

“ Thou dids’t understand me, knave,” cried Sir George, pacing the hall with impatience.

“ I thought I did,” replied Stanley.

“Thy words were plain; I took thee for a man of honour.”

“And sayst thou I am not,” cried the knight, halting and turning fiercely to Stanley.

“If you withhold that you have given,” answered Stanley, “in the face of the world, I say you have no honour.”

“Ned Stanley, thou art mad thus to tempt my mood,” said Sir George.

“Tush, I will not bate my breath for the mood of any man,” cried Stanley; “I will claim my right in the teeth of the devil. Wherefore have you freed my foe? In this you have done me wrong.”

“He was no captive of thine,” answered the knight; “thou wert his when he fell into my hands.”

“You do me injustice to let me here,” cried Stanley, “when I would seek my revenge.”

“Seek it another time,” replied Sir George. “The man is in my ward whilst he is on my land, and it is broad. He is a gentleman of blood, and will not fly thee.”

“ He a gentleman !” cried Edward Stanley with a sneer. “ He is as nigh a kin to gentility as Degge’s hobby to the first race of Arabian steeds.”

“ Marry, master Edward Stanley,” cried Sir Simon, who stayed to see the conclusion of the scene, “ a homely country-bred horse, be he steady and honest, is better than a vicious gennet, though it be of the thorough-breed.”

“ Ay, for such drivelling dolt-heads as thou art,” cried Stanley. “ But it is time for me to try my horse’s mettle. — Ho, Ridgway ?”

“ What now ?” said Sir George, “ what would you do ?”

“ Comrades !” continued Stanley, without replying to Sir George ; “ fortune has shipwreck’d our hopes on this coast ; we must endeavour to put to sea in a new carrack — I am for Lancashire — do ye sail with me ?”

“ Stay, thou hot-headed knave,” cried Sir George, whose affection, notwithstanding their late quarrel, was knitted to Edward Stanley, “ ye would not quit me for what has passed between us ?”

“ Why should I stay ?” replied Stanley, “ to see my bride given to yon dastard ?”

“ Thou liest, Ned Stanley,” cried the knight. “ Perdition seize me, if I would give her to any man but thee, though he were a crowned king.”

“ It’s time for me to try my horse’s mettle,” cried Sir Simon Degge. “ What, ho, Septimus !”

“ Now Degge !” cried Sir George, “ what maggot bites thee ?”

“ Fortune hath shipwrecked my hopes on this coast,” returned the knight of Bowdon, sarcastically imitating the tone and action of Edward Stanley ; “ I must endeavour to put to sea in a new carrack ! I am for Bowdon — but I’ll take care none of ye sail with me. — ’Fore George, I’ve had enow of ye all — satis, jam satis.”

Edward Stanley looked fiercely at his imitator, who shrank beneath his withering glance, but at length he turned upon his heel, and, approaching Sir George Vernon, gave him his hand, which the knight shook heartily, “ Come, Ned,” he said, laughing with

great glee, “if thou hast a stomach for fighting, prepare thyself; for Degge will not tamely bear the loss of his mistress — I see valiant vengeance blazing in his eye.”

“I am no swash buckler, gentlemen,” said Sir Simon, “I am a man of respect — give me my due. — Ye all know I am a justice of the peace — do me justice therefore, as ye would abide by law.”

“Hark! how the peaceable knave threatens!” said Edward Stanley; “he thinks we are the churls of his ordinary land. — Rascal! I will teach thee the rogue’s march —”

“Nay—peace Ned—peace Sir Simon,” said the knight of Haddon, interposing. “Gentlemen, I entreat ye, set by your angry looks. Keep them until ye are awakened by the horn of war. — Now have we nought to think on but our bridals. — Let every man put on his gayest looks with his gayest clothes, and think of nought but revelling and jollity. Tom Stanley, hie thee to thy love’s chamber — here is the key. Set the birds at liberty.”

“Right heartily, sir,” answered Sir Thomas, who, taking the key, ran away joyfully to the apartments of Dorothy Vernon.

“Prepare yourselves, gentlemen, to receive Earl Derby,” said Sir George, “I expect him with every hour’s tide, and with him a gay company. Let them not catch us in the livery of wrath, but in that of buxom enjoyment. Come, sirs, exert yourselves.”

While he was yet speaking, a loud thundering at the gate proclaimed the arrival of some visitors, and Sir George instantly ordered the portal to be thrown open, and hastened out, attended by all present to receive his guests. But it did not prove Earl Derby and his friends. The Lady Cavendish, attended by a couple of serving-men on foot, entered the court, and Sir George very gallantly assisted her to alight. Having gone through the common forms of salutation, she made no stay with the knight and his friends; but apologizing for abruptly leaving them, passed on to the apartments of the Lady Margaret.

By my life," said Sir George, "the Lady Cavendish is still a fine woman. What an eye has she in her head, and what a leg to stand on!"

"What a chest she has," continued Edward Stanley, with a sneer; "and saw ye ever the like of her shoulder? What's the market price, sirs?"

"What! do ye take her for a horse?" said Sir Simon Degge.

"No, nor you for a mayor!" answered Stanley, with contempt. "Dost thou take us for jockies?"

"Come, Degge!" said Sir George Vernon; "thou hast been foiled twice in thy love ventures, and merely because either thou wert too old, or the girls too young. But what sayest thou to this mature dame — this full-breasted Juno — art thou not tempted to attempt her? Her years will nigh match thine own."

"Nay, i'faith," answered Sir Simon, "she hath a spirit somewhat a-kin to the Lady Margaret's — I've been burnt once."

"Mind him not," said Stanley; "if she were the sister of Socrates, he would

say she was too fat rather than have her. He would not marry a queen past five-and-twenty. Youth and innocence for my dainty knight."

"Why, then he shall have one of thy sisters, Ned," said the knight of Haddon. "They are young enough for him."

"A brave thought, i'faith," cried Stanley, clapping Degge upon the shoulder, whose countenance nevertheless shewed no symptoms of relaxation. "Thou shalt have Jane, that is, if thou canst pink the Lord Dudley, who has a mind to her; or Meg Stanley; but, truth to tell, sirs, she's like her namesake here, somewhat hasty; but there's Kate, my mettlesome knight,—she was at Knowsley when thou wert at Lathom, as fine a wench and as gentle a wench as ever saw the pulpit at Paul's; tender as a coney; soft as a dove; mild as a May morning. She might have been born and fashioned to please thee withal. What sayst thou boy? Shall we become brothers?"

"I know not, sir," answered the knight; "you have cozened me before, and for

ought I know, the lady you have described as a miracle of gentleness may turn out a she devil, a harpy, a double-tongued asp. I'faith, sir, the more praises you have lavished on her, the more do I mis-doubt her desert."

"If thou art not the most incredulous Trojan that ever shut his ears against truth," cried Stanley, "whip me with a holly bough, and call me rogue. Sic incredulus odi."

"Pish!" cried Sir Simon, with a learned sneer, "thou mistakest the passage clean. It meaneth, I incredulous do hate your lies."

"Sirrah, rascal!" cried Stanley, "Good manners, or I will crop thine ears. What the devil care I what it means, or what you mean, or any such mean carpet-knave. I am no pedagogue."

"Well, sir, peace be with you; pax vobiscum et omnibus," said Sir Simon. "I am silent as Hippocrates."

After this conversation, Sir George led the way out of the court into the park, and they sauntered beneath the shade of

the huge trees that stood between the hall and the river. The Jesuit and Father John having got into a conversation relative to the spreading of the new or reformed opinions, pursued their walk along the bank, leaving Sir George Vernon with Stanley, Sparandam, and Degge, to whom a discussion of the nature they were engaged in possessed few charms. The metal of their conversation was more attractive : it turned upon the sports of the field, in which there was no greater adept than the knight of Haddon. The art of falconry was detailed in many of its branches. Deer, fox, and hare hunting were set forth in terms befitting exercises so noble. The choice of steeds and dogs was ably descanted on ; while the deer that were grazing at no great distance were fearfully disturbed at the terms of hunting which the knight vollied forth with all his might. When the knight of Haddon had somewhat wearied himself with this theme, his neighbour, Sir Simon, took up the cudgels, and battered his companions with the ancient and venerable art of angling, in which

strain he would perhaps have continued a full hour, if the attention of Sir George had not been aroused by the appearance of a large company of persons on horseback, who advanced upon the great road to the hall.

“ Who are these ?” said Sir Simon.

“ Earl Derby,” replied Edward Stanley.

“ Earl Derby,” cried Sparandam, “ der teufel, man, he will recognize me and du Prat.”

“ Fear not that,” replied his companion, “ I scarce knew thee myself when thou hadst changed thy habit. He saw thee but once, and he is tender-eyed. Du Prat is yet safer than thou ; keep thy countenance.”

Sir George Vernon and Sir Simon Degge hastened up the bank beneath the trees to the gate, to receive the distinguished guests as they alighted ; but Edward Stanley held Sparandam back until they had all passed.

“ There is my dear dad,” said he, pointing out his father, “ on the sorrel horse ;

i'faith he is mighty merry; may it last. Yon women in the first rank are my bonne mere and my sisters Stourton and Morley. Ann has her brats with her."

"What man is he rides beside the earl?" said Sparandam.

"Lord Morley," answered his companion, "and by the side of the second bevy of women is Dudley. I'll be sworn Jane Stanley is among them; ay, and with her my sister Stafford. Her lord hath business, and cannot come, mayhap."

"Is the third rank formed of your kinsfolk?" said Sparandam.

"Ay, questionless, by Margaret and Katharine, my sisters, or half sisters, as ye will," replied Stanley, "Ay, sooth, Jermin, art thou there? and what man of estate is beyond? nay, 'tis Sir John Knivet. Come, this is new."

The cavalcade, composed of the persons mentioned by Edward Stanley, together with many of the household officers of Earl Derby, and the attendants of the several personages, a group of more than a hundred persons, slowly ascended the bank, and were received

at the gate by Sir George Vernon with great courtesy.

“Now, follow me,” said Edward Stanley to his companion, “and I will present thee to my father in the bustle of Sir George’s welcome.”

He led the way up the bank, followed by Sparandam, and approached his father, who, with Sir George Vernon, stood by the gate, surrounded by the other guests.

“Morley, Dudley, Knivet, Jermin,” cried Edward, presenting his hand to each in turn. “How shines the sun with your health and fortunes, fair sirs? Earl Derby, good morrow.”

“Well, Ned,” replied his father, “thou art at last vanquished. I give thee joy, lad.”

“The lady will give me more, or my necromancy is naught,” answered his son. “I have to beg your lordship’s regard for a noble friend of our worthy host — the valiant Colonel Baron Sparandam.”

The earl instantly removed his hat, and bowed with great courtesy, whilst

the German, half veiling his face with his beaver, returned the salutation with infinite ceremony. Edward Stanley then introduced him to the rest of the company, and Sir Simon Degge also to those with whom he was unacquainted.

“Here, Kate!” said he to one of his sisters, a smiling blooming arch beauty of seventeen, “I have got thee a husband, wench. Sir Simon, this is the lady I so warmly recommended; thou mayest now judge whether or no she’ll suit thee.”

“The lady is surpassingly lovely,” answered the knight, blushing, and bowing to the ground, “I fear — that is, I hope she would not vail her regards upon a man of my complexion — I beg pardon, I meant to say — I mean no offence, fair lady.”

“Truly sir, I believe not,” replied Katharine, smiling, “what you did say was hardly intended.”

“I’faith, madam, I hope and trust I have said nothing that may offend,” cried Sir Simon, raising his eyes in great alarm to the face of the lady, whose glances quickly threw the poor knight

into a second fit of confusion ; “ I would sooner offend so fair a damsel than mine own soul. I crave indulgence ; I am not used to commit offence against my soul, I mean to say, against the ladies.”

“ Indeed, I believe ye, sir,” answered Katharine, with a tone of pity ; “ I do not believe you would offend either willingly.”

“ That’s because you don’t know him,” said her brother ; “ Simon Degge’s a sheer pirate among women. He attacks all nations — all ages — all colours — English — woman or Moor, fifty or fifteen white or black, ’tis no matter — he sails with a rover’s licence.”

Sir Simon did not speak, but he held up his hands, and extended his long visage to a more than usual length, whilst Katharine laughed, and the rest of the company tittered at the singular expression of countenance which the knight’s astonishment at the charge brought against him had excited.

“ Faith, you may laugh,” cried Edward Stanley ; “ but ’tis true, I can bring proof. — Why sirs, this sober looking

knight, as some here present can tell, even whilst he was at Lathom, sought to elbow Tom Stanley out of his bride — my brother will avouch the fact — and since we came here, he has dressed himself in smiles and graces, and clothed his discourse in sententious erudition, gilding it with scraps of latinity, which, heaven help me, are beyond my scanning, and all to cheat me out of the fair Dorothy, who doth mightily relish your men of letters. Nay, had I not promised him the hand of Kate, if he would let me have a free course, I might have lost the race.”

“Perilous lies — perilous lies,” cried Sir Simon, enraged beyond keeping the forms of courtesy.

The fair Katharine, and all present, could not forbear laughing heartily at this irrepressible explosion; but Edward Stanley kept a serious countenance, and laying his hand upon his sword, said, “I would not affright my sisters with the sight of steel, else this insult should not pass unavenged, but I will not mock thee Kate, with the hope of a husband — let him take thy hand, and he shall live.”

“Comfort yourself, sir knight,” said Katharine, as a mother would speak to a petted child. “Take no heed of my wayward brother. His humour shall profit him nothing; for indeed, sir, I will not be your mistress against your inclination.”

“Could I be assured,” said the knight in a whisper, “that your kindness would hold — that you would not put on the sharp spirit of your kinsman here — I would full gladly, fair Katharine, become your servant.”

“Alas! sir, do not trust me,” said the damsel with a serious face, “I dare not trust myself — I am of a race as hot and hasty as the lightning — we will be friends, good Sir Simon, not lovers — come, let us in.”

She took the knight by the arm, and amidst the titters of her sisters, and the rest, led him into the hall.

The remainder of the day, except that part of it which was consumed in taking their meals, was spent by Sir George Vernon in receiving guests, a great number of whom, the friends and kins-

men of Earl Derby or himself, had been invited. The ladies busied themselves in the order of the ceremonies, and in examining, fitting and disposing to the best advantage the bridal dresses and other paraphernalia necessary on this occasion. The Countess of Derby in particular, with whom the fair sisters of Haddon were great favourites, exerted herself as well in making such adjustments as should singularly adorn her betrothed daughters, as in giving them advice for their carriage and government throughout the next momentous day, a lecture for which the happy Margaret had perhaps more need than desire. Her sister Dorothy, though relieved from a portion of her fears by the liberation of her lover, and encouraged by the assurances of Lady Cavendish, who remained with her the whole of the day, still hung between hope and dread; and as she alternately leaned towards either, shewed by her countenance the ease or the misery of heart. And when in the evening, Lady Cavendish took her leave, and prepared to return home, her agony

became almost insupportable. She threw her arms around the neck of the dame, and stifled her sobs in her bosom, inattentive to the consolations of her sister, who feared that she would, in her frenzy, let fall something that might alarm the countess and her daughters, and put them on their guard. But Lady Derby and the rest of the females imagined her passionate feelings to proceed from that coyness and maidenly reserve, which most young women in her situation feel, or find it necessary to affect; and though they might fancy the Lady Dorothy carried her bashfulness to an extravagant height, yet the thought never struck them, that her behaviour could arise from actual fear of being wedded to their relation. By degrees, however, her agitation subsided, and rallying her spirits, she bade Lady Cavendish a good night, beseeching her that she would be early in her attendance on the morrow.

Whilst this scene of lamentation was being performed up stairs, the hall exhibited one of glorious hospitality. About fifty persons of distinction, the friends and

kinsmen, either by blood or marriage, of the two houses of Stanley and Vernon, besides an innumerable number of gentlemen holding situations of trust in the families of the several noble guests, sat around half a dozen prodigious tables that crossed the hall ; exhibiting such a spectacle of festive enjoyment as few houses of our modern nobility can ever boast. It was then the custom to celebrate the eve of any great event with almost as much ceremony, at least with as much hilarity, as the day on which that event was actually solemnized ; and as Earl Derby and the knight of Haddon had marked down the ensuing as the happy day, the latter resolved the eve of it should be spent in the customary way, that is to say, in a tremendous debauch. Not only the nobles, knights, and gentlemen in the hall, but all the domestics and servants, and the peasantry upon Sir George's estate, were invited to partake of his hospitality. The bells of Bakewell church rang incessantly ; and the children in quaint antick habits performed dances and gambols in the park, where

good ale was brought out in barrels to regale those who could not press within the courts of the hall. Such a scene had not been remembered as Haddon at this time exhibited, and has, it is likely, never since been seen. Bonfires were lighted on every hill, and the progress of every hour told, by the roar of enjoyment proceeding from all quarters, that the good cheer of the King of the Peak had not failed of its effect. Among those who partook of this festive scene with the greatest relish were Anak Ollerenshaw and his father Gilbert, who had been set at liberty by Sir George's command, whilst the dame, being too feeble to bear a removal from the hall, had been visited by Margaret and Dorothy Vernon, and by their order carefully attended, and supplied with necessaries. Both of the fair brides offered to take Rose into their service; but she declined quitting her mother, who needed her affectionate care.

The arcadian scene in the park did not cease with night fall. The moon shone out, and the revellers who were mostly

woodmen, or men inured to a rustic life, preferred enjoying themselves under the naked cope to slumbering soberly at home. A fat buck or two were brought down in the dusk by some such marksmen as Anak Ollerenshaw, and the hides being instantly flayed, they were broiled upon the embers of the fires, and greedily devoured by the drunken boors, who, at length satiated with liquor, or unable to stand, fell at length upon the sward, and there reposed until morning.

CHAP. XIV.

And many a beauteous dame and courtly knight,
Came there the nuptials to celebrate :
Some versed to wing from bow the nimble flight,
Some the near foe with brondir'n to amate ;
Me too they welcome to the hall of state ;
With bel accoil they wished me to take
A round or two, and chuse me out a mate.

THE SQUIRE OF DAMES.

ACCORDING to the etiquette of the time, Sir Thomas Stanley and his brother Edward, attended by all the younger of the male guests, and accompanied by a large band of instrumental performers, appeared at an early hour the following morning beneath the window of the apartment where the brides slept, and serenaded them with a number of soft and amorous tunes ; whilst the rustics, again roused to their diversions, made the park echo with the firing of guns, the sound of horns, drums, and all kinds of minstrelsy.

The solemnization of the marriage was, according to an ancient custom in the family of Vernon, to take place at night ; and the day was to be filled up with revelling, feasting, sports of all kinds, and a grand masque. The business of the day, after the serenade, proceeded with a sumptuous breakfast, of which five hundred persons partook. The tables at which the lower domestics and the peasantry sat were laid out in the park, as much that they might enjoy themselves the more freely, as that they might not incommode the guests of higher quality. All persons, however, were too eager to commence the diversions that were proposed, to sit long at breakfast. The young men and maidens, decked out with ribbons and copper lace, speedily formed themselves into parties for dancing, and executed many dances with great agility, if not with abundant execution. There were also companies of archers, who shot at the popinjay, for back sword, sword and buckler, and cudgels, wrestling, and all other country sports.

But the rustics were speedily called from their own diversions to behold the exercise of some of the noble guests, who were mounted on their steeds, and prepared to engage in the celebrated play of running at the ring. The arena for their exploits was a flat piece of ground in front of the hall, and just beneath the battlements, from which the ladies and those gentlemen that did not play beheld what passed. In the middle of the arena was fixed a tall post, from which extended a hook bearing the ring, which hung loosely upon it, and to carry away this ring from its position at the point of the lance, and with the greatest grace and dexterity, was the object now about to be sought by those gentlemen who addressed themselves to the adventure. Much ceremony was used by the more unpractised cavaliers to avoid the first run, whilst those who were masters of the game absolutely refused to lead the way, expecting some sport from the failure of the tyros; and at length Sir George was obliged to speak to them from the battlement.

“ For the love of your mistresses, gallants,” cried the knight, “ some of ye set on, or I shall be obliged to come down and shew the way myself. Master Jermin, my Lord Dudley, your mistress’s eyes are on ye ; do your devoir.”

But Jermin and Dudley only laughed, and looking up to Sir George, shook their heads.

“ Mein herz,” cried Sparandam, who had mounted himself on a bony horse of his host’s, “ it shall not be said by yon fair ladies, I dare not. Here goes.”

And clapping spurs to his horse, with more vigour than discretion, he put forward with great boldness. But his courser had no mind he should at that time gain any honour ; for feeling the incision of the rowels very keenly, he stopped short in the midst of the career, and lashing out with his heels at the same moment, fairly kicked his rider out of the saddle, who fell to the ground, amid the laughter and shouts of the more vulgar spectators.

“ Ho, d—n him for an ill-bred, dishonest brute,” cried the German, with

all his might. "This is the first time, I'll be sworn, he was ever in gentle company. Here groom, Ridgway, help me to rise lad, and take away that villanous jade."

"You're not hurt, Sparandam," said Stanley, riding up to him.

"No, to be sure," replied the German, who perceived that his comrade could scarcely forbear laughing; "one may be dashed lifeless with such a fiend's prank, and not be hurt. Laugh on; I know 'tis the trick o' the day; a cursed beast."

Stanley's groom, Ridgway, assisted him to rise, and he then hobbled out of the career, grumbling at every step. When the arena was cleared, the Lord Dudley couched his lance, and having a steed upon which he could rely, started off at high speed, and succeeded in bearing away the ring, amid the plaudits of the multitude. Another was instantly supplied, and run at by Lord Morley and Jermin, successively, who both failed. Sir Thomas Stanley went at it next, and failed also; but it was carried away by a

fourth competitor, Sir William Knivet, who received the rude congratulations of the spectators. At length, Edward Stanley, who had for some time merely looked on, when the ground was pretty clear, dashed away at the utmost speed of his horse, and without a thought of failing, bore away the ring, which slid down his lance, and shouting "another," checked his horse before he had ridden five yards beyond the goal, and returned full gallop to his post. This feat he achieved twelve times running; and for the grace and ease with which he performed what seemed to others a difficult exploit, he received a thousand bravos and huzzas from the by-standers.

Many others tried their skill and essayed their fortune; but though there were several young men of great address, there was not one that could compete with the practised arm of the soldier. Even Lady Cavendish, to whom he was far from agreeable, could not help giving her testimony to his accomplishment in the exercise.

"I confess," she said, turning to Sir

George, "he is not equalled in this play by any cavalier I ever saw."

"I think not," replied the knight, "and yet Saint Lo was once a right sure hand. But wherefore, cousin, came he not with you? I marvel he should be absent."

"He left Chatsworth yesterday morning on business," replied Lady Cavendish, "but promised it should not be a matter of small weight that detained him from your solemnity. He will come though it be at night, and begged I would crave leave for him to use you without ceremony. He may, perhaps, bring with him a friend."

"A hundred, if he like," answered the knight; "the more friends he brings, the better shall be my welcome. But come, fair ladies, the play is over; if it please ye, we will descend."

A magnificent and ample dinner, for which all had gained themselves appetite, except the anxious Dorothy, succeeded these sports. Of what it consisted, how it was arranged, and the other particulars concerning it, our readers must spare us

the recital, because it is now necessary that we come to something of more moment than even eating and drinking. Those that think otherwise are at liberty to shut their eyes, and use their own fancies in delineating this scene of old English hospitality.

The sad-coloured livery of night at length superseded the glistening habit of the day, and the more distant woods of Haddon were shrouded in the dim veil of the twilight. But the hall, the courts, and the open part of the park surrounding the castle, were illuminated by the splendour of ten thousand torches, which cast a glare upon the waves of the Wye, and upon the amphitheatre of woodland that rises behind the hall. Again bonfires blazed on every side, and the roaring of guns, drums, and trumpets, the note of the sweet-toned harp and buzzing bagpipe, and the shouts of the revellers, resounded from all quarters. But we leave the good people below stairs to their own enjoyments, and conduct our readers to the dancing gallery, where, precisely at eight o'clock, (blush ye mo-

dern belles) the company began to assemble. This room, above one hundred feet in length and nearly twenty broad, afforded "ample space and verge enough" for the evening's revel. It was magnificently lighted, and beautifully adorned with chaplets of flowers, which gave it an air of arcadian beauty. A passage, also, which led from the upper end of the gallery into the garden, was thrown open, and lighted with sconces; and much taste was displayed in illuminating the gardens, which, rising terrace above terrace, seemed like a Roman theatre decorated for the shews. The light was not strong in the gardens; but lamps were placed at the head of each avenue, so as to give a soft and delightful hue to the place. It was in fact necessary that the revellers should have some cool spot to retire to occasionally; for their number was so great, the evening was so warm, and the heat thrown out by the innumerable lights so intense, that it would have been impossible for the gentlemen, and much less the ladies, to have confined themselves the whole evening

to the gallery. In the midst of the dancing-room was a large recess, around which the musicians were ranged, and they had already tuned their pipes and commenced playing, when the company began to assemble. Most of the young people in addition to the masquerade of their dresses wore visors, particularly the ladies; probably because they might conceal the blushes of the brides; but the Earl of Derby and his countess, the Lady Cavendish, the knight of Had-don, and others of their maturity, were without. Many of the gallants, too, adjusted their masks so negligently that they were easily discovered, and few of the ladies chose to remain so closely disguised as that their lovers could not discriminate them from the surrounding fair. The grooms were alone out of masquerade. Thomas and Edward Stanley were clad alike in suits of white satin flowered with silver, and richly decorated with pearl ornaments, and in their hats of the same stuff were enormous plumes of white ostrich feathers. A person who did not know them would

have thought that Edward was the elder, for though he was less tall and less stoutly made than his brother, his countenance was darker, his features more fixed and callous, and although eminently handsome, he appeared as one that had lived long in the world, and had received some slight buffets in his pilgrimage, that had set him on a sterner guard. Thomas Stanley was all openness and hilarity, and moved about with a quick step and jocund eye among the ladies, giving and receiving infinite pleasure. Edward, too, was active and buoyant as usual; but there was frequently mischief in his eye, and a furrow of vengeful dissatisfaction on his brow, as he looked upon his bride, which shewed that he marked the difference between his brother's state and his own. His desire for Margaret, also, was by no means abated, and the thought that his loss of her was about to be sealed for ever rankled venomously in his heart.

The gentlemen had not to use much intreaty to persuade the ladies to dance. Their hearts and heels were too light for

them to remain idle, and they gave their hands to their partners with great vivacity. A measure was first stepped by a lady whom Sir George instantly recognized as his daughter Margaret ; and a gentleman whose identity he was utterly at a loss to discover.

“ Know ye that cavalier ? ” said he to Lady Cavendish, who stood by ; “ by my heart he hath a gallant person.”

“ It is not the Lord Dudley,” returned Lady Cavendish.

“ No,” replied Sir George ; “ I saw him but now in a yeoman’s jerkin. I should have thought it had been Tom Stanley, but their dresses are diverse, and yonder stands my son-in-law.”

While they were yet speaking Sir William Saint Lo joined them, and slipping aside his mask, discovered himself, saying,

“ Well, Sir George, you owe me somewhat for my being here — I have nigh killed myself with hard travelling to witness your bridal.”

“ And I am right glad to see you,” replied the knight shaking his hand

warmly ; “ and thank you for your courtesy. But where be your friends, Sir William ? my Lady Cavendish here assured me you would grace our ceremony with some of your friends.”

“ But one, good sir,” replied Sir William, “ and he is now pacing a measure with yon fair lady.”

“ By my troth a gallant gentleman,” returned Sir George, “ a native of this country, sir ?

“ Of England ? yes,” answered the courtier ; “ Sir William Peto by name — a man of family and fortune surpassed by few.”

“ Sir William Peto,” exclaimed the knight of Haddon with great surprise, “ I have heard of him — a great courtier is he not.”

“ A most goodly ornament of the court,” answered Saint Lo, “ a man of great parts — he is the continent of all humanities, they were inhuman who said otherwise. I know not whether his wit is surpassed by his learning, or his attainments by the talents nature hath endowed him withal — his person, as you see, is

marvellously handsome ; and visor never cased a face that ladies would sooner look upon."

" Hereafter I shall be glad to know him," replied the knight of Haddon.

" As he now burns for your good fellowship," said Saint Lo, " he is a man, sir, can do much at court. I know not wherefore, but he was as hot to be at your solemnity as myself."

" Commend me to him," said Sir Gèorge, " he hath done me much honour."

" Will your ladyship honour me with your hand ?" said Saint Lo to Lady Cavendish.

" Not to dance, sir," answered his mistress, " I prefer being a spectator — the gratification of my eyes to that of my feet — but I will excuse you, servant."

Sir William bowed, and, re-adjusting his mask, walked away among the crowd of revellers. At the same moment the measure was concluded, and the stranger led Margaret Vernon to her seat, and placed himself beside her. A coranto was next danced by a number of belles

and beaux, in which Sir Thomas Stanley joined, having the lady Dorothy for his partner; and whilst it was being executed Edward Stanley left a crowd of ladies and gentlemen with whom he had been conversing, and came to Sir George Vernon.

“Now, Ned,” said the knight, “why dance you not? when I was as young as you there was no better nor gayer dancer i’ the court. To it, boy, thou hast no corns.”

“No,” replied Stanley, “but I have no great skill in dancing — I mortally hate your measure which is as slow as the movements of a munition waggon. Of your coranto, I like not the figure — a cinque pace is well enough, and that I’ll try when I can find myself i’ the humour. But what gallant is he who danced with the lady Margaret?”

“Hist!” whispered Sir George, looking at Lady Cavendish, who however was conversing with Earl Derby. “He is our courtier — Sir William Peto.”

“How! the devil!” cried Stanley, “the man Probus saw in London?”

“The same,” answered the knight;

“ he seems to have made a tool of Saint Lo, and got him to introduce him hither.”

He had scarcely spoken when Probus, who strutted about the room in a suit of snuff-coloured velvet, highly delighted with his own importance, came up to them, and with a very significant wink said in a whisper, “ Gentlemen, an auspicious night. I know somewhat that will please ye — he is come — he is here.”

“ Who is come? who is here?” said Sir George, willing that he should explain himself.

“ Our courtier — our socius — our auxiliary,” replied the doctor, “ Sir William Peto — I have seen him and spoke to him.”

“ Indeed, but this is well,” said Sir George; “ and what says he?”

“ He will take his opportunity to confer with you,” replied Probus, “ when there is leisure. He will remain with a friend of his at Chatsworth, Saint Lo by name, and captain of the queen’s guard, until your festivities are over, and then

unfold to you in private his reason for seeking you at Haddon. His being seen at the bridal will strike suspicion dumb ; at present he thinks it better you should be ignorant of him, save as the friend of Saint Lo, lest it should awake the suspicion of the captain."

" True, we will note his counsel ! " replied the knight of Haddon. " If thou seest him again, say I hold his visit kindly, and will mark the first opportunity to thank him for his courtesy."

" I will find him, and tell him so ! " replied Probus going.

" Nay, hold thou back," said Edward Stanley, " I will do it ; I will find some moment when no one is by."

" Thou hadst better leave it to Probus," said Sir George, " for thy whispering may induce suspicion. Mind ye, Earl Derby and Saint Lo have their eyes on us. Be circumspect therefore."

" Well, let it pass," said Stanley. " Courtesy is nothing, and we shall have time for business hereafter."

He then left his companions, and seeking out a partner joined in a cinque-pace

with a good deal of grace as well as spirit. The gallery now became exceeding hot ; and many of the ladies and their gallants extended their promenade into the garden. Among the rest the stranger, or Sir William Peto as Sir George now held him, supported Margaret Vernon ; and as he passed the knight, who stood at the head of the gallery very near the door which communicated with the garden passage, bowed very low, and received his salutation in return. The evening was fine, the stars shone out, and the waning moon began dimly to peep forth, casting a galaxy of light along the horizon. Scarcely a breath of wind disturbed the foliage of the trees ; and there was a gentle coolness, a dewy and luxuriant freshness in the air, as well as a fragrant odour arising from a great quantity of rose trees which grew beneath the windows of the mansion, that made the garden indescribably delightful to the fair revellers. A band of musicians was stationed in an arbour at the further end of the first terrace ; and the melody of the music, the fragrance

of the flowers, and the soft aspect of the evening made the place resemble a scene of enchantment. Every eye was bright, every heart bounded, save the eye and the heart of Dorothy Vernon, who leaned on Sir Thomas Stanley, faint with fear, and sick with anxiety. She neither heard the jests of her companions, nor saw their joy; but alone contemplated her own situation, and trembled at the uncertainty of her fate. It is true she had not been much troubled with the attentions of Edward Stanley; for whether he thought he should soon have enough of her, or that it would savour of fondness if he bestowed much of his company upon his own bride, or that he altogether disregarded her, we do not know, but she seemed quite indifferent to him, and he made not one effort to detect her beneath the masquerade she wore; leaving her entirely to the entertainment of any gallant who should think her worthy his courtesy. She had not, indeed, lacked attention, for Sir William Saint Lo, Sir Thomas Stanley, Lord Dudley, and

many other gentlemen had almost constantly surrounded her.

The company who first entered the garden had not promenaded long before many others entered it, and the several avenues were speedily filled with detached parties of masquers, who as they passed each other, diverted themselves with mutual remark and repartee. Sir Thomas Stanley, in particular, who was in high spirits, fired at all that came within ear-shot.

“Ho ! signior cavalier !” said he to a tall spare man, whom he recognized to be Sir Simon Degge, and upon whose arm was leaning his laughter-loving sister Katharine, dost thou not mind the song :

Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together ;
Youth is full of pleasaunce,
Age is full of care :
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather,
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.”

“Marry, sir, talk when you see frost on my brow,” replied Sir Simon in an affected voice ; “when I cough like a horse in a well, and go upon three legs.”

“ I’faith had you not been so nimble,” said Sir Thomas, “ I should have taken you for old Sir Simon the king.”

“ Ay, but you see this is young Sir Simon the squire!” cried Katharine: “ no more like to that ancient gentleman of the hills than I am to my grandmother.”

“ How ancient!” cried the knight of Bowdon; “ I am not unacquainted with good Sir Simon’s person, and i’faith he appears to me none so much aged — some five and thirty —”

“ Was he when I was born,” cried Katharine, “ and that is seventeen years gone by. Yet is he not pursy, at which I marvel.”

“ Marvel not, nymph,” returned her brother; “ he is past the fat age — a peevish old bachelor is he with a drumstick leg that would serve for the sceptre of Pluto — his arm is like dried succory, and his face is lank o’purpose that it may shew at vantage that pharos his proboscis. Such an animal hath been seldom exhibited.”

“ Nay, now you are hard upon the

old gentleman," cried Katharine ; " and I suspect you are some gallant who have caught your mistress lending him too open an ear ; i'st not so think ye, good partner."

" Marry, like enough," answered the knight. " If he rail at his mistress as he hath done at that worthy gentleman Sir Simon Degge, I marvel not she should lend an ear to other voice than his."

" She were but light to lend an ear to any vice," cried Sir Thomas Stanley, " and much less to vice of thy insinuation."

" Now, sir gallant," cried Katharine Stanley, " you do clap his meaning in the vice of your wild wit, and twist it into a vicious shape. He meant not as you mean."

" No, perdie," cried Sir Thomas, " he is too mean to mean as I mean. He is but a mongrel — a mesne betwixt gentleness and the herd, a — sort of bastard gentleman, or gentleman sans gentleness, which if he possessed, he would part with it as a commodity in truck for so much land."

" Heydey, sir, your tongue rattles

like my lady's litter," cried Katharine; "I beseech ye let modesty hold your reins for time to come."

"No, because then I should lack confidence to encounter your ladyship," replied Sir Thomas. "But heaven be with you—here lies our way."

"And ours also," said Katharine, "for you shall not so easily escape."

"Nay, follow, at your peril," answered her brother. "But if your don fires another cracker at me, let him look to his own escape—he shall not lack chastisement if he thrusts out his mask as the scapegoat for his ears."

Sir Thomas Stanley with the Lady Dorothy on his arm had hung somewhat behind in company with his sister and Sir Simon Degge, whilst the Lady Margaret, the stranger, and Sir William Saint Lo, had left the lower garden, and were now pacing the upper where there was less company with animated steps. Thither Sir Thomas and Dorothy followed them, still accompanied by Katharine Stanley and her gallant; but they had scarcely ascended the flight of

steps that led from the lower into the upper garden, when the former party left that also, and proceeded up another ascent into that sequestered avenue called The Lady Dorothy's Walk, whither Sir Thomas and the rest also pursued them.

"Who are those before?" said Katharine; "they are sure jacks o'the lantern for they fly as we approach. What spot call ye this? I can scarce see the moon through the trees."

"This is the Lady Dorothy's Walk," replied Sir Simon; "her place of study—her academe—but since her love of the outlaw was discovered, she hath been debarred its enjoyment."

"What love? what outlaw?" cried Katharine; "you amaze me truly."

The knight was about to reply when a small door leading from the avenue into the park, opposite which they now were, was broke open, and a number of men armed and masked rushed upon them, and pushing Sir Simon on his back, seized Sir Thomas Stanley and his sister. The Lady Margaret Vernon also, who was nigh at hand with Saint

Lo and the stranger, was also secured ; but the courtier and his friend were left at liberty, and provided with weapons. At the same time the sound of horses feet was heard beyond the wall, and the stranger, pulling off his mask, discovered the features of the outlaw of Haddon.

“ Stir not, speak not, as ye love life,” cried he. “ Dorothy bid your sister farewell. To-night shalt thou be out of the reach of tyranny — Needham.”

The forester, Walter Needham, instantly appeared, and assisted to attire the Lady Dorothy in a riding gown and hood. She then kissed her sister, and bidding all farewell, passed the gate with the outlaw and Saint Lo. In a few moments, those within the avenue could hear the outlaw, his bride, and Saint Lo depart at full gallop ; and when they had got out of hearing, the men who held Sir Thomas and the rest released them, and passing the gate, galloped away on horseback after their leader.

CHAP. XV.

Brabantio ! thieves !

Thieves ! thieves !

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags.

Thieves ! thieves !

OTHELLO,

WHILST the outlaw and his companions remained, Sir Simon Degge lay still and silent ; but when he could no longer hear the sound of their horses feet, he sprang from the ground, and with a most exalted voice roared out,

“ Treason, treason, murder, thieves, — a rape, a rape, — help sirs for dear life, — a rape, a rape, — some help here. Arm, arm, for the love of heaven, — a rape.

“ Beshrew thy tongue,” cried Sir Thomas ; “ why didst thou not cry out when there was a chance of rescue ? ”

But heedless of this reproach he continued to give vent to his clamour, until all the gentlemen who were out of doors flew to the avenue and surrounded them. The gardens were now a scene of consternation ; the ladies frightened at some-

thing, though what it was they did not understand, crowded into the gallery, and spread terror throughout the room, whilst Sir Simon Degge, leaving Sir Thomas Stanley to entertain them with an account of the adventure, flew to the gallery, and bursting among the ladies, bawled out,

“Wo betide, wo betide — a most villainous plot — a most devilish plot — wo betide — get ye arms and to horse forthwith — I say forthwith —”

“Wherefore? What mean ye, sir;” cried Sir George Vernon, much enraged at this interruption; “why come ye thus with a fearful tongue, striking these ladies hearts with wonder and dread? Who are you?”

“Who am I, forsooth?” cried Sir Simon, endeavouring to tear off his mask — but it stuck fast in some part of his ruff, and shewed only the upper part of his face — “See ye not who I am?”

“Ay, Sir Simon Degge,” answered the knight of Haddon; “and now, sir, what hath aroused your spirit to this noisy commotion?”

“That which will arouse your’s to ten times the pitch on’t” replied the knight; “your daughter Dorothy is spirited away, rapt out of our hands — soused upon as Jupiter swooped Gany-mede — the outlaw hath carried her off.”

“Thou liest, traitor — this cannot be — he durst not do’t for his life,” cried Sir George, whose features were fearfully convulsed.

“Nay, but the fair Margaret will avouch it,” cried Degge, “and so will Sir Thomas, and the fair lady Katharine.”

“Thou liest — I will not believe it,” cried Sir George. “Ned Stanley — look to thy bride — the loss will be thine, if she be gone indeed.”

He had little need to counsel the fiery soldier, who, snatching a rapier from a corner where the gentlemen had deposited their swords, flew to the garden, and in every face he met, found a confirmation of the knight’s tidings. He was speedily followed by Sir George, Earl Derby, and the rest of the gentle-

men, who furnishing themselves with weapons, ordered their horses to be instantly saddled. Upon arriving at the avenue, Earl Derby found his sons in high altercation. Edward Stanley stamped furiously on the ground, and brandishing his weapon in a menacing attitude, cried, "Thou art a traitor — By my life it is not possible but thou shouldst know the plot. You and Saint Lo have consorted with this felon to rob me of my bride."

"How, Ned Stanley!" cried his father, hastening between them, "wherefore dost thou accuse thy brother? on what ground? How has he betrayed thee?"

"He conducted the fair Dorothy hither," replied Edward, "he and Saint Lo. Will ye make me believe that he could not have defended her though unarmed, till he might call assistance?"

"No, marry, for there were a score of armed villains against us two," cried Degge; "it was not in the force of man to keep the lady."

"Peace, thou cowardly rascal," cried Edward Stanley. "This brother of

mine and his bride were the known defenders of the outlaw — had they not been so, he would have swung in the wind 'stead of living to do this deed. But why stand we here? — to horse. — Ridgway, villain — bring me out Lord Derby's barb — haste, dog, or I will cut thy throat — By my life, my soul disliked that traitor, when he danced to-night with the Lady Margaret. This is the courtier, Sir William Peto — a marvellous service hath he rendered us."

"Nay," said Probus, "Sir William Peto danced not to-night — It was Saint Lo that danced with the Lady Margaret."

"How sayst thou?" cried Stanley. "Saint Lo — then who is Peto, prithee? thou shouldst know him again."

"He wore peach-coloured satin," answered Probus; "and Saint Lo, white, after the fashion of your dress — Peto is the elder of the two."

"Clean betrayed," cried Stanley furiously; "we may arm for somewhat else than to recover my bride. — Good father, Sir George, ring out your bell — call

together your tenants and your friends — arm those that are about the house — we must now either fight or flee.”

“What mean ye?” said Earl Derby, “you sure have no cause to fear.”

“No; while we have arms in our hands, — surely not,” replied his son. “But, to be short, gentlemen, we have a plot in hand for putting down the queen. It has been revealed to her, — we have been doubly betrayed by Saint Lo, and we must now set onward. You that will join with us, had best declare yourselves suddenly; and you that fear to match with us in brotherhood, hie ye home with speed — our banner must be spread with the light of day.”

A pause ensued, which at once broke the hopes of Edward Stanley. Not a man stretched forth his hand, or congratulated his treason. The knight of Haddon, who was took somewhat by surprize, looked much disconcerted; while Earl Derby, after eying his son with great severity, said, “Am I, and are these gentlemen your prisoners, sir? for assuredly we are no friends to your

faction. Traitor, you have led this worthy and generous man, who has done too much honour to such a renegade to call him son, to the very brink of death."

"But I will keep him from falling with my good sword," cried his son.

"Thou," answered his father with contempt; "degenerate wretch! — have I not saved thee once, and must thou tempt fate again — out of my sight, or I shall be tempted to offer the world an apology for thy birth by giving thee death with my proper hand. Away."

"I will, sir," replied Edward Stanley with undaunted confidence; "but the die is cast, I will to my game, the knight for the queen."

He pushed his way through those who stood around, and opened the gate as a body of horsemen whom he took to be the friends of Sir George rode up to it. Several of them sprang from their steeds, and a man whose noble mien and rich harness shewed he was their leader, led into the avenue a score of harquebussiers, who, before any resistance could be made, surrounded all persons present. Edward

Stanley, desperate at the sight of this company, made a fierce thrust at the leader, but his rapier broke short upon the cuirass of his opponent, who said, with great coolness but severity, "Break no more swords, Colonel Stanley; my arms are proof. Earl Derby, I am your lordship's servant."

"My good Lord Rutland," cried the earl advancing, "I knew you not — my trouble blinded me; what must be done with this wilful boy?"

"May I crave your hospitality, Sir George Vernon," said the Earl of Rutland, in a tone which shewed there was not much cordiality between him and the knight of Haddon. "Will it please you to shew us a private chamber, where I have somewhat to say that it befits you to hear? Meanwhile, good Sir Thomas Stanley, return you to the revel with these gentlemen. I have heard of your solemnity and would not mar it — affright not the ladies with this untoward adventure. Above all, assure the Lady Dorothy, I will not, if't be possible, rob her of her groom."

“ My lord, I can spare satire,” replied Edward Stanley; “ I have not to tell you where fair Dorothy is.”

“ Indeed you have,” said the earl, “ if she be elsewhere than here.”

“ She has been carried off by Sir William Peto and Saint Lo,” said Sir Thomas Stanley; “ we were but now about to engage in pursuit of her.”

“ Peto! a phantom!” replied Earl Rutland; “ but you wrong Saint Lo; for he is here with me. Ho, Saint Lo, come forward.”

The courtier instantly appeared, and Sir George Vernon said, “ Now, traitor of a double stock, whither hast thou borne my daughter?”

“ The horse that bore her,” replied Saint Lo, “ was guided by her own hand — she is safe from your tyranny.”

“ What! wast tyranny to withhold her from matching with an outlaw, a felon, a robber?” cried Sir George; “ wast tyranny to marry her to the son of Earl Derby.”

“ The man she will marry is as good as he,” replied Saint Lo, “ I mean no

abatment of respect to my good Lord Derby ; but I say that John Manners is as good a man as Edward Stanley."

"How, my son!" cried Earl Rutland, "my John, mean ye, Saint Lo? This cannot be."

"Yet so it is, my lord," replied Saint Lo; "your son hath long loved the fair Dorothy, hath long haunted these woods in habit of an outlaw. The differences that have held the houses of Manners and Vernon apart, forbade all hope of a marriage with consent of friends, and they would have deferred it till a fairer opportunity, but the time pressed. John Manners besought my aid, and my friendship could not refuse it. Besides, this pair of lovers are every way equal, in blood, in fortune, in fair alliances — what can ye wish for more? Their marriage will heal the feuds that have subsisted hitherto between ye — two fair objects will be rendered happy, and Colonel Stanley may not complain, for had not this plot succeeded, the Lady Dorothy would have died rather than become his wife."

“ I see, my lord of Rutland,” said Earl Derby, “ this is news that hath somewhat surprised you ; but on my honour I think heaven hath especially ordered these events. Sir George, I am led to believe, from what my lord hath let fall, that Sir William Saint Lo hath rendered ye service in more points than one. But if it please you let us retire, we may converse in private more freely ; Thomas Stanley, my lord of Dudley, good Morley, return ye all to the gallery, and calm the fears of the ladies.”

Sir George then led the way, followed by the Earls of Derby and Rutland, Sir William Saint Lo, and Edward Stanley ; and passing through the hall, he conducted them to his own parlour.

“ I visit Haddon,” said the Earl of Rutland, when they had seated themselves, “ not for the apprehension of traitors, but for the prevention of treason. At once, know sirs, that the Spanish envoy betrayed ye to the queen ; and your ambassador met Saint Lo as Sir William Peto, at the Bishop of Aquila’s lodgings. Our gracious sovereign would

not admit that any man of the house of Stanley, that any kinsman of Earl Derby, was treacherous. In her whole proceedings was she guided by Sir William Saint Lo, and guess then whether or not you have cause to esteem him your enemy."

"It seems not, my lord," replied the knight of Haddon, "and I frankly crave his pardon for that which has passed."

"The queen hath bid me say thus," continued the Earl of Rutland, "Sir George Vernon and the rest are pardoned even before they sue for mercy. Colonel Stanley, if he choose it, may find employment in her highness' army."

"I will not!" exclaimed Stanley stubbornly.

"Then she gives you leave to accompany your friends Colonel Sparandam and his coadjutor abroad," said the Earl. "She will not bind you to her but by kindness."

"I may not remain in England?" said Edward Stanley.

"Yea, sir, as a servant of her highness," replied the peer.

"Then not at all," cried the soldier;

“farewell Earl Derby and good friend Sir George. I will hence direct.”

“A part of my guard shall wait on you and your friends,” said the Earl of Rutland rising.

“What then, I am in your lordship’s custody,” said Stanley. “This is the free pardon her majesty vouchsafes.”

“Her majesty is careful that you shall neither harm yourself nor others,” returned Earl Rutland. “You refuse her service. Your hatred of her still rankles in your heart.”

“True,” cried the bold traitor.

“How then should she trust you with liberty?” said the earl with great composure. “No, my young gentleman, I should be loath to advise her; for I have seen you with these eyes do deeds of valour with a handful of followers, that drew the eyes of men of experience. Well, then, may your boldness take captive the hearts of the vulgar.”

“What! does this lion queen fear me?” cried Stanley with a fierce smile. “Come then, I must relent; I will accept her offer, and become her soldier, so she will

not rust me with peace. And so farewell, for I will not stay to revel it, where I have lost the argument of my pleasure.

“Stay but a while, and I will bear you company,” said Earl Rutland. “This outlaw of my blood and his fair partner cannot pass the guard I have stationed around, and must return, or they will be brought hither to me.”

“Away, away,” cried Stanley. “If I see your son, I shall strike him dead, though it were through the heart of his mistress.”

“Ay,” said the Earl smiling, “but not through my steel corslet, unless you get a weapon of better temper than the last. But come—we will leave Haddon.”

“Nay, my lord,” said Sir George Vernon, “tarry our bridal; and as it seems Ned Stanley has given over his claim upon my daughter, let your son have her with all my heart, if you cry content.”

“My lord, this is nobly said,” cried Earl Derby.

“I cry content with all my heart!” answered the earl of Rutland; “but now am I on state business, and must accom-

pany Colonel Stanley to London. Take it not ill, I beseech ye; from my soul I wish both the couples joy, and continual satisfaction."

The earl then gave his hand to Sir George Vernon, who received it with great demonstrations of pleasure, and held a long conversation with his new kinsman, whilst Edward Stanley went out to prepare himself and his friends for their departure. This was soon done, for Sparandam and the Jesuit were too well satisfied to escape so easily after their detection, to think any thing of the suddenness of their journey. The latter gave his purse, of a considerable weight, to Sir George Vernon, for the use of his sister, whom he recommended earnestly to the knight's protection; and after taking their leave, the three conspirators, attended by Earl Rutland and his cavalry, left Haddon.

The Earl of Derby, Saint Lo and Sir George Vernon then returned to the gallery, where, instead of the life, the bustle, the gaiety which but lately pervaded it, they found a whispering anxiety,

a fearful and tremulous curiosity, among the women, and among the men a lifeless and motionless languor that told them the effects of the late scene were not easily to be overcome. By the exertions of the Earl of Derby and his son, together with the raillery of Margaret Vernon, whose courage was obliged to exert itself, the company at length in some measure recovered their vivacity, but no female could approach the garden door, which was now closed, without a feeling of trepidation. They had again struck up the dance, and the ladies had assumed a little confidence, when a loud knock at the garden door threw them again into consternation. Sir Thomas Stanley flew to open it, and throwing it to the wall, admitted the Lady Dorothy Vernon and her gallant outlaw.

“Where is my father?” cried the maiden, rushing into his arms. “Pardon me — pardon me.”

“Pardon me, dear wench,” cried Sir George, whose eyes filled with tears, “and forget what is past. But where is my son? Where is John Manners?”

The outlaw (for we will still call him so) came forward, and the knight heartily embraced him.

“Come, musicians!” cried the knight, “now strike up. Good, my guests, recover your spirits, and let me introduce to ye this noble youth as my son. Fair ladies, foot it deftly, and heaven grant ye partners to your liking, both for the dance and for life. What, son, Earl Rutland met with you? You might not pass his guard?”

“Even so!” answered his son-in-law; “we were utterly desperate, when we met my father and Colonel Stanley.”

“And then ye were utterly mad, I’ll be sworn,” cried the knight; “but here is my Lord Derby will be glad to see the outlaw of Haddon.”

The revels continued until midnight, when, as the Vernon’s family use was, the two couples were solemnly joined in holy matrimony, in the chapel of Haddon, and after a supper wherein neither the quantity nor quality of the viands could be reasonably surpassed, the entertainments for that day concluded.

Tradition does not say how long the festivities of these weddings were kept up; but their splendour has remained unrivalled unto this day. There have been many bridals, and many noble ones in the county of Derby, since the marriages of Margaret and Dorothy Vernon, but they have passed away with all their enjoyments, they have sunk into oblivion, leaving the ceremonies we have endeavoured to describe blooming, we trust perennial.

If we did not say something more of our personages by way of bringing their histories briefly to a close, we should perhaps lay ourselves open to an accusation of having affected the Byronian mystery. This we by no means desire, and therefore will readily tell what we know, if it may avert such a charge.

Know then, readers, that which you might easily find out by a little inquiry, particularly if you are disposed to take a peep into the Peak of Derbyshire, that Sir George Vernon, after having the sa-

tisfaction of beholding his grand-children around him, died within a few years after the marriage of his daughters, famed as much for his violence of temper and his disregard of authority, as for his hospitality and generosity. In obedience to the request of the Jesuit (who also died soon after his return to the Low Countries), the knight of Haddon supported Gilbert Ollerenshaw and his wife in great comfort, and not only gave them the money confided to him, but also a portion to Rose, who intermarried with the woodman Walter Needham. Anak Ollerenshaw, in process of time, became butler of the house, and leaving his pilfering propensities, lived in great credit, and enjoyed the esteem of his master.

Our readers might also learn, if they would trouble themselves to inquire, that Sir William Saint Lo married the Lady Cavendish, but died in a short time without having any issue by her. Sir Simon Degge, that knight of sapience and oracle of learning, married also, but to whom or to what (for he doubtless allied himself to his bride's money bags, or her

acres, and not to her person) we cannot declare. We only know that some of his descendants of the female line are now living somewhere in the midland counties.

The Earl of Derby died in 1572, and his funeral is celebrated by many authors as the most splendid upon record. The historian of his house says of this great man, “ It appears from all our historians, that he lived in the greatest splendour and magnificence, without any dependence on the court. His greatness supported his goodness, and his goodness endeared his greatness: his height was looked upon with a double aspect by himself, as an advantage of beneficence, and by others, of reverence. His great birth raised him above private respect, but his great soul never above public service.”

Sir Thomas Stanley and his lady, for any thing we are informed to the contrary, lived happily many years; and Sir John Manners and the fair Dorothy, upon the death of Sir George Vernon, having Haddon and its dependencies assigned

to them, as their share of the knight's possessions, had their residence at the hall, and continued to exercise hospitality until they were removed by death to the world of spirits. We must not forget to inform our readers that his grace, the present Duke of Rutland, has sprung from this union of the lovely Dorothy Vernon with the outlaw of Haddon.

Of the soldiers, Sparandam and Edward Stanley, it is related that the former was shot in storming Nuys in the bishopric of Cologne; but a worse fate befel the latter. He remained in the service of Elizabeth, and went over to Holland with the Earl of Leicester, when that favourite was commissioned to assist the provinces in their struggle with the Spaniard.

“At the siege of Zutphen,” says the historian of his house, “he acquired great reputation by a most uncommon action of valour and undaunted courage. In the attack of a fort of the said town, a Spaniard brandishing his lance at him, he caught hold of it, and held so fast, that he was drawn up by it into the fort;

at which the garrison was so intimidated (supposing all the enemy were following him), that they fled, and left the fort to him; for which hardy and valiant action the Earl of Leicester knighted him, and gave him £40 in hand, and a yearly pension of one hundred marks, payable in England, for his life."

Nevertheless, Edward Stanley, ever restless and desirous of change, having concerned himself with Babington's conspiracy in favour of the Queen of Scotland, and fearing he was betrayed, joined with the celebrated Rowland York, then the governor of a fort opposite to Zutphen, as he himself was of another named Deventer, to betray them to the Spaniards, and although they were detected by the states, they succeeded in their treacherous undertaking. Stanley, who persuaded most of his garrison to go over with him to the Spaniards, remained in his government of Deventer, and bore a commission in the Spanish service; but at length he received the reward of his treachery. He became neglected by the Spanish government,

and died an exile from his family, his name infamous, and his glory forgotten.

Such, gentle readers, is the end of our eventful history. If it please not all, yet will it please some, and those particularly who either live near or are familiarised with the woods of Haddon, and the ancient residence of the King of the Peak.

THE END.

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